

Quebecers, the Roman Catholic Church and the Manitoba School Question: A Chronology

by

**Claude Bélanger,
Department of History,
Marianopolis College.**

- 1869-70 Red River Rebellion led by Louis Riel; the Metis objected to being incorporated into Canada without having been consulted on the matter, assented to it, and having their various rights safeguarded. Various petitions of rights were drafted; these were embodied in the Manitoba Act in articles 22 and 23. Verbal assurances are also known to have been made to Mgr. Taché who feared that the annexation of the territory by Canada would result in « the betrayal of the interests of the French Canadian Catholics » who Represented about 50% of the population of Manitoba.
- 1869, December 1 Article 10 of the *List of Rights* drafted by Riel's Council (Provisional Government), demanded that « the French and the English languages be common in the legislature and courts, and that all public documents and acts of the legislature be published in both languages. » This was embodied into s. 23 of the Manitoba Act of 1870.
- 1870, May 12 Royal assent was given to the Manitoba Act. By it, Manitoba was incorporated into Canada as a province, rather than as a territory as first planned. By virtue of s. 22 of the Act, confessional (i.e. Roman Catholic and Protestant) schools are guaranteed when such schools existed « by law or practice in the province at the Union ». Such schools did exist prior to the Manitoba Act. Other subsections of the Act parallel those of s. 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 in allowing for an appeal to be lodged in the federal government should rights, existing by practice at the Union or established by law after the Union, be prejudicially affected by future provincial legislation. Section 23 safeguarded the English and the French languages in Manitoba in the same manner as they are protected in Quebec by s. 133 of the Constitutional Act, 1867. At the time of the Union of Manitoba with Canada, the total population of the province was estimated to be around 12,000, about equally divided between the French and the English, and with a slight majority for the Catholic population. There were 33 schools in operation.

- 1871 One of the first measures adopted by the new provincial legislature of Manitoba was the passing of an « Act to establish a system of Education in this Province » which created a confessional school system. A board was set up, made up of two sections, one Catholic and one Protestant, with an equal number of members. The majority of the members of the first board was made-up of clerics, among them the Roman Catholic bishops of St. Boniface and of Rupert's Land. Twenty four school districts, 12 for each confession, were also created. Two superintendents, one for each confession, were also appointed with joint secretaries. These superintendents were members of the Board on which sat no less than ten, and no more than fourteen members. Each section of the Board managed its own schools and exercised discipline over them regarding examinations, grading, the licensing of teachers, selection of textbooks for religious instruction. Each section was entitled to share equally in the grant appropriated for education by the provincial government. The structure of this system was to remain in place until 1890.
- 1870-1890 The population of Manitoba grows much more slowly than had been hoped at the outset of Confederation. Such population growth as there was tended to come from Ontario so that, over time, the percentage of the Manitoba population that was French and Roman Catholic dropped drastically to less than 10% (although the Catholic population was somewhat larger, at about a seventh of the population of the province). Manitoba's population was estimated at 152,506 in 1891 and grew to 255,211 in 1901.
- 1871 The Constitution Act, 1871 constitutionalized the content of the Manitoba Act. Henceforth, the terms of the Manitoba Act were part of the constitution of Canada.
- 1875 Amendments to the Education Acts were made by which the number of the members of the Board was increased to 21, 12 Protestants and 9 Catholics, and the provincial grant was now appropriated on the basis of the number of children of school age in each district. Catholics did not oppose these changes as the Protestant population was increasing at a much faster rate than that of the Roman Catholics.
- 1875 The North-West Territories Act provided for guarantees to confessional schools in the territory as well as for the use of the French and English languages in the debates, proceedings, records, journals and in the Ordinances emanating from the Territorial Council.

- 1877 A further amendment to the Education Act guaranteed that in « no case a Protestant ratepayer shall be obliged to pay for a Catholic school, and a Catholic ratepayer for a Protestant school ». This was made possible by a new division of the school districts of Manitoba by which the entire territory of the province was completely covered by each denomination, instead of divided between denominations as had been the case in the early years of Manitoba.
- 1885 Second Riel Rebellion, in the North-West territory. This was the occasion of great division in Canada and growth of animosity between francophones and anglophones, Catholics and Protestants, Ontario and Quebec. Anti-French and anti-Catholic feelings ran especially high in Ontario.
- 1888, January 13 Thomas Greenway became Premier of Manitoba.
- 1888 Desirous to secure French-Catholic support for his government that had just been elected in the provincial elections, Thomas Greenway, Liberal Premier of Manitoba, extended guarantees to Mgr Taché that French-Catholic school and language rights would be safe with him. James E. P. Prendergast, a French Catholic, entered the cabinet with the blessing of the archbishop following these assurances.
- 1888, July 12 The Jesuits' Estate Act was enacted by the Legislative Assembly of Quebec under the government of Honoré Mercier. The Act aimed at compensating the Jesuits for their properties that had been confiscated by the government after the Conquest. A sum of \$400,000 was to be paid. A separate decision appropriated \$60,000 to the Protestant Committee. The Act was voted unanimously in the Legislature after an extensive arbitration process carried out by the Pope as there were competing claims and considerable complications between Catholics on this matter. The correspondence regarding the apportioning of the grants to Catholics was incorporated into the law. Radical Protestants identified the bill as evidence of clerical control of Quebec, and as proof of the subjection of the State to the Church when, otherwise, they believed that there should be absolute separation between Church and State. Protestants in Quebec, it was alleged, had only supported the measure because they were afraid and had been browbeaten into submission.
- 1889 At least five different radical Protestant groups, including the Ottawa branch of the Orange Lodge, petition the Federal

government to disallow the Jesuits' Estate Act. In its petition, the Presbytery of Montreal of the Presbyterian Church of Canada called the Jesuits « a society which has proved itself the enemy of civil and religious liberty all over the world », while that of the Orange Lodge alluded to « their evil influence on public and private morality ». When the Minister of Justice, John S. Thompson, a convert to Roman Catholicism, reported to the federal cabinet, on January 16, 1889, that the law should not be disallowed a storm of protest arose throughout Protestant Canada. On March 26, 1889, William Edward O'Brien, commander of the York-Simcoe Regiment sent to put down the 1885 Riel Rebellion, and federal conservative member for Muskoka, moved in the House of Commons that the Act be disallowed by the government. In the course of the debate, supporters of disallowance emphasized that this was « a British country ». The vote on the motion in the House did not represent well the extent of support there was in Canada for disallowance of the Jesuits' Estate Bill although it did reflect the intensity of feelings on the matter. Only twelve members, among them D'Alton McCarthy who resigned his Ontario Conservative Party presidency, joined O'Brien in supporting disallowance; 188 members rejected the motion including John A. Macdonald, Edward Blake and Wilfrid Laurier. The supporters of the motion, known by Catholics as the Devil's Dozen or by Protestants as the Noble Thirteen, began an anti-French, anti-Catholic campaign and took their message to Ontario and into Western Canada. Interestingly, in light of the fact that the McCarthy supporters will oppose so strenuously demands by the Catholic minority for the federal government to disallow the Manitoba school legislation of 1890 and 1894, as well as Ordinance no. 22 of the North-West Territories, the O'Brien resolution included this statement on the federal power of disallowance: « That this great power, while it should never be wantonly exercised, should be fearlessly used for the protection of the rights of a minority, for the preservation of the fundamental principles of the constitution, and for safeguarding the general interest of the people. » (See House of Commons, *Debates*, 1889, p. 811)

1889, May 16 An editorial in the *Brandon Sun* was the first open criticism made of the confessional school system of Manitoba for quite some time.

1889, June The Equal Rights Association - « Equality to all. Privileges to none » - was established in Toronto. Its prime targets were the bilingual schools of Ontario and the Catholic Separate School « privileges » of the same province. It fueled a context in which anti-Quebec, anti-French and anti-Catholic feelings ran high. The

main people associated with this group were derived from the supporters of the disallowance of the Jesuits' Estate Act.

1889, July 12 The Government of Manitoba demanded that the Catholic section of the Board of Education turn over to the consolidated funds of the province the surplus it had accumulated over the years. The Catholic Committee was forced to give-up \$13,879.47. There was widespread opposition to this measure.

1889, August 5 D'Alton McCarthy delivered his famous speech at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. He railed against French Canadian « nationalists » who were aggressively asserting their right to remain « a distinct race » in Canada. He argued that the unity and the progress of Canada was threatened by these nationalists. Manitobans were invited to join a large movement to deal with French-Catholic rights. Attorney-General Joseph Martin also spoke at the meeting and asserted that « he was an Englishman and he believed this was an English country. French was a most beautiful language, but to him it was beautiful at home, to him it was a foreign language; and (he) maintained we should speak the language of the country ». The traditional interpretation of the origins of the Manitoba School Question is that these speeches sparked the issue. In a revisionist article, printed in 1973, historian J. R. Miller demonstrated that this was not the case and that the cause of the Manitoba School Question ought to be found, instead, in the erosion of the province's cultural duality, between 1870 and 1890. In his opinion, « the sustained attack on Franco-Manitoban institutions was the simple desire of English, Protestant immigrants for institutions that reflected their own concepts of proper government and education », and « the Jesuits' Estate Act agitation thus helped to bring into the open the hostility to cultural diversity that had festered in Manitoba for a long time ». He also asserted that there were political difficulties associated with the failed railway policy of the Liberal government of Manitoba by Thomas Greenway.

1889, August 12 In a sermon given by Rev. George Bryce and delivered at Knox Presbyterian Church, as reported by the *Manitoba Free Press*, the cleric stated: « When men deliberately state as they have done that they aim at building up a French Canadian nationality, what is that but a blow to our hopes as one Canadian people? Language and separate schools are being used to build up what is really destructive to our hopes as a people, and we should be unworthy of our name if we permitted such aggression ».

1889, September The *Manitoba Gazette*, published in both official languages

to this point, was only published in English from this date.

1889, December The Anglican bishop of Rupert's Land, speaking at the national synod of the Anglicans, expressed satisfaction with the religious subjects now taught in the Protestant schools of Manitoba although he considered the amount of such teaching insufficient. He also admitted that only the Roman Catholic Separate schools existed in Manitoba. This is important in the light of the Logan case that was initiated later.

1890, January 22 D'Alton McCarthy introduced a motion in the Canadian parliament to abolish the official bilingual status of the legislature of the North-West territories. An amendment to this measure was adopted which provided that, after the next general elections for the territory, its assembly would have the right to decide the language of debates, records and proceedings. On January 18, 1892, the territorial legislature voted a motion that stipulated that « it is desirable that the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly shall be recorded and published hereafter in the English language only ».

1890, March 18 The Manitoba legislature introduced a measure to abolish the official status of the French language in the legislature, the laws, records and journals, as well as the Courts of Manitoba. This was in clear violation of s. 23 of the Manitoba Act and was declared unconstitutional in 1979 in the Forest case. Interestingly, the second, and last, clause of this bill stipulated « This Act shall only apply so far as this Legislature has jurisdiction so to enact, and shall come into force on the day it is assented to. » It was assented to on March 31, 1890. Upon petition from the minority, the federal government refused to disallow this piece of legislation, maintaining that the question was one for the Courts to decide.

1890, March 28 Manitoba's Lieutenant-Governor, John Schultz, on good friendly terms with Archbishop Taché, and requested to do so by a petition of the French Members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, entertained the idea of reserving the Bill. However, he was directed by the Macdonald government to give royal assent to it.

1890, 31 March Assent was given to « An Act Respecting the Department of Education ». This was the first of the two bills to create a public non-sectarian system of education in Manitoba and to abolish the confessional school system set up in 1871. Details of this bill are discussed in the Notes on the 1890 Manitoba school legislation of 1890. The Bill had been introduced into the Assembly on March 12.

This bill was voted 26 to 10.

- 1890, 31 March Assent was given to « An Act Respecting Public Schools ». This is the second of the two bills to create a public non-sectarian system of education in Manitoba and to abolish the school system set up in 1871. Details of this bill are discussed in the Notes on the Manitoba school legislation of 1890. This Bill had been introduced into the Assembly on March 12. The vote on the Bill was 25 to 11.
- 1890, April 7 Archbishop Alexandre Taché, as President of the Catholic section of the Board of Education, requested that the federal government disallow the two educational acts.
- 1890, April 12 Appeal of Mgr. Taché to Lord Stanley, Governor-General of Canada. The document, after a long discussion of promises made at the time of Union, and an assertion of the rights of Catholics in Manitoba, concluded « I therefore most respectfully and most earnestly pray that your Excellency, as representative of our most beloved Queen, should take steps that, in your wisdom, would seem the best remedy against the evils that the above mentioned and recently enacted laws are preparing in this part of Her Majesty's domain. »
1890. April 14 Eight members of the provincial legislature of Manitoba requested that the federal government « grant such relief and remedy » as « may seem meet and just ».
- 1890, April 29 The « Blake » resolution was adopted. The House of Commons assented to a motion by Edward Blake, former leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, which mandated that all cases of disputes on education be sent to the judiciary for decision. This was proposed to preempt attempts to have the constitutionality of controversial education bills disposed of by means of disallowance. Since both national parties were greatly embarrassed by appeals from the minority for disallowance, on grounds that their rights were prejudicially affected, they were happy to be provided an opportunity, with the Blake motion, to pass on this difficult issue to somebody else and, in any case, to gain time without creating enemies of anyone. While Macdonald, Blake and Laurier all supported this motion, they agreed that this did not dispose of future responsibilities the federal government might have toward the minority.
- 1890, May 12 Letter from Louis-François Laflèche, bishop of Trois-Rivières, Quebec, to Joseph-Adolphe Chapleau, Secretary of State of Canada, requesting that the federal government disallow the

unjust laws enacted by the Manitoban government. Laflèche is reported to have sent similar letters to Hector Langevin and Adolphe Caron, both important ministers in the Macdonald government. See the documentary section.

1890, May 23 Negative response by Chapleau to the letter of Laflèche. See the documentary section.

1890, June 4 A National Congress of French Catholics of Manitoba was convened in St. Boniface. Delegates from each of the parishes of Manitoba were to be sent. It added its weight to the wave of protest sweeping catholic Manitoba over the school laws.

1890, undated (likely during August of the year) Petition of the Roman Catholic clergy and laity of Manitoba containing 4,267 names. It requested that the federal government « make such provisions and give such directions for the hearing and consideration of the said appeal as may be thought proper ». It further affirmed the belief that the legislation « prejudicially affect the rights and privileges with regard to denominational schools which Roman Catholics had by law or practice in the Province at the Union. »

1890, November Beginning of the *Barrett v. City of Winnipeg* case. John Barrett was a Roman Catholic of Winnipeg who refused to pay the school tax bill sent to him for the support of the public schools. He claimed that this prejudicially affected his rights as set out in the Manitoba Act.

1890, November 24 Mr. Justice Killam, of the Manitoba Court, dismissed the appeal of Barrett. The law was constitutional as it did not affect the rights as they existed *in practice* at the Union.

1891-1897 Period of intense activity by the Protestant Protective Association (PPA). This anti-Catholic secretive organization was of American origin and recruited as many as 100,000 members in its various chapters throughout Canada. The PPA attacked Catholics and French Canadians for failing to assimilate with the majority, and thus frustrating the dream of a homogeneous country. According to historian James T. Watt, they sought to create a nation « based on a common language and cultural background and a general pride in the so-called Anglo-Saxon race ».

1891, February 2 The Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench, Appeal Side, heard the appeal in the Barrett case. By a majority decision (2-1) the decision of Justice Killam was upheld. The two anglophone judges stood by the provincial government while the French judge, Justice

Joseph Dubuc, sided with the minority.

1891, February 14 Adolphe Chapleau, Secretary of State in the federal cabinet and the leading Quebec minister in the government, made a strong commitment to Archbishop Taché: if the federal government does not bring an efficient remedy to the school question, he would personally leave the cabinet to fight for such a measure. This was a strong commitment on the part of Chapleau who had refused in 1885 to abandon the Macdonald cabinet over the Riel hanging.

1891, March 5 The Macdonald conservative government was returned to power in the general elections. Both major parties were very successful in keeping the Manitoba issue out of the elections. Laurier, running for the first time as national leader of the Liberal Party, won 34 seats in Quebec, against the 29 retained by the Conservative Party.

1891, March (undated specifically) The archbishops and bishops of the ecclesiastical provinces of Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa signed jointly a Pastoral Letter on the subject of the Manitoba schools. The bishops wished to support Mgr. Taché in his struggle and wrote: « We cannot, as guardians of the prerogatives of Our Holy Mother Church, remain as cold spectators to the persecutions that are inflicted on them (Manitoba Catholics). In conscience, we must remind all of the faithful of our provinces of the true doctrine concerning the control that the Church must exercise on the education of the children in the schools ».

1891, March 6 A petition signed by all but one of the Roman Catholic bishops and archbishops of Canada requested that the Canadian government « afford a remedy to the pernicious legislation above mentioned (the two educational bills), and that in the most efficacious and just way ». The episcopacy had stopped short of asking for outright disallowance. Only Bishop Rogers, of Chatham New Brunswick, refused to join the other 28 bishops. He did not believe in politicizing the debate. The petition was given to the Secretary of State on March 24.

1891, March 21 Report of John Thompson, Minister of Justice, on the petitions for disallowance, or federal action. He rejected disallowance as « it became apparent at the outset that these questions required the decision of the judicial tribunals ». If the courts found against the minority, « the time will come for Your Excellency to consider the petitions which have been presented by and on behalf of the Roman Catholics of Manitoba for redress ».

1891, June 6 John A. Macdonald died. From his own point of view, Macdonald had managed the Manitoba issue successfully, particularly through the general elections of 1891. Macdonald had been adept at keeping together the French-Catholic and the radical Protestants within his political party. His death began a period of great instability, indeed of crisis of leadership, within the Conservative Party, and thus, until 1896, within the Government of Canada. Over a six year period, while the Manitoba school question unfolded, Canada had six different Prime Ministers: Macdonald until June 1891; John Abbott, the first Quebecer to have occupied the post of Prime Minister, from 1891-1892; John S. Thompson, the first Roman Catholic to become Prime Minister of Canada, from 1892 to 1894; Mackenzie Bowell, former Grand-Master of the Orange Lodges of Canada, between 1894-1896; Charles Tupper, for a few months in 1896, and Wilfrid Laurier who was elected in the general elections of 1896.

1891, September 30 The « Blake motion » was incorporated into a law presented by John Thompson, Minister of Justice. The Bill was passed unanimously.

1891, October 28 By a unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of Canada (5-0) the Manitoba Court decisions were reversed and the Manitoba school laws were declared unconstitutional. According to Archbishop Taché, this « was a source of great satisfaction » to him and to Roman Catholics in Manitoba.

1891, November 10 In a letter addressed to John Thompson, federal Minister of Justice, Archbishop Taché strongly urged that the services of Edward Blake, former leader of the Liberal Party of Canada and outstanding lawyer and debater, and John S. Ewart, a dedicated lawyer from Winnipeg, be retained as Counsels for the minority in the upcoming case before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Blake was not retained by the government, a decision that raised controversy and, likely, hurt the chances of the minority before the J.C.P.C. Taché had also urged that the best of English Solicitor be retained; this, also, the government of Canada failed to do even while Taché wrote: « Dear Sir John, I have trusted you in these painful occurrences and refused emphatically to resort to means which would have embarrassed the Government; now I am sure that the wish for economy will not be an obstacle to what we consider necessary for success in England ».

1891, December Mr. Alex. Logan, Anglican resident of Winnipeg, also instituted proceedings to have the school laws declared unconstitutional. It is believed that this suit was instituted at the

urging of the government of Manitoba so as to confuse the issue and make it appear as if the public school system of Manitoba would unravel, each minority wishing to have schools and demanding a share in the government grants, and thus create a tower of Babel.

1891, December 19 The Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba, following the jurisprudence set by the Supreme Court of Canada, found in favor of Logan and declared the school laws of Manitoba *ultra vires*. Both this case, and the Barrett one, were appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

1892, July 23 The Greenway liberal government of Manitoba was returned to power in the provincial elections. In Manitoba, the parties now stood as follows: Liberals 28, Conservatives 11 and one Independent.

1892, July 30 The six judges of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council found in favor of the City of Winnipeg against John Barrett. According to their Lordships, no right that existed *by practice* had been prejudicially affected by the 1890 school laws. The judgment was delivered, on behalf of the Court, by Lord Macnaghten.

1892, September 20 Petition by Archbishop Taché to the federal government for a Remedial Order to be issued.

1892, November 22 Petition by leading Roman Catholics of Manitoba for a Remedial Order to be issued.

1892, December The North-West Territories' legislature, under the leadership of Frederick Haultain reduced substantially the rights and privileges that Roman Catholic schools enjoyed in the territories. There was much discussion as to the effect that lack of action on the part of the federal government over the Manitoba schools had on Haultain's move. As in the case of Manitoba, the federal government refused to disallow Ordinance No. 22. See on this issue: *Mémoire de Monseigneur Taché sur la question des écoles. En réponse au rapport de l'honorable Conseil Privé du Canada*. Montréal, Beauchemin et Fils, 1894, 64p.

1892, December Sir John Thompson became the Prime Minister of Canada. One man missing from his cabinet was Adolphe Chapleau. According to Paul Crunican, Chapleau left the cabinet in part because he wished the federal commitment on behalf of the Manitoba minority to go much farther than his Ontario colleagues were prepared to go.

- 1893, January 21 John S. Ewart, counsel for the Roman Catholic minority of Manitoba, appeared at a public hearing before the federal cabinet to argue that the government should hear the appeal of the minority and issue remedial legislation. The Manitoba government did not send a representative to the hearings.
- 1893, March Joseph-Israel Tarte, a former Conservative Party supporter but now a leading liberal, introduced a motion of censure of the government's action, or lack thereof, in the Manitoba school issue. The issue was debated in the House of Commons between March 6 and 9. The motion was defeated 120 to 71 with the radical Protestants joining hands with the Liberals in seeking to have it adopted.
- 1893, April 20 Archbishop Alexandre Taché published a pamphlet titled: « *Are the Public Schools of Manitoba the Continuation of the Protestant Schools of the same Principle?* ». He presented extensive and disturbing evidence that pointed in that direction.
- 1893, May The federal government formulated the six questions that were to be submitted to the Supreme Court. This became the Brophy case. Gerald Brophy was the Roman Catholic law partner of John S. Ewart who was co-counsel for the minority. Essentially, the questions at hand in the Brophy case centered around: 1. Whether or not rights had been prejudicially affected, especially those established after the Union; 2. Did the possibility of an appeal to the federal authorities continue to exist in light of the court decision in the Barrett case? 3. Did the federal government or Parliament have the power to take remedial action? Interestingly, both Archbishop Taché and the Manitoba government considered the judicial round pointless.
- 1893, November 22 In a by-election held, Joseph Martin, former Attorney-General of Manitoba in the Greenway government and nemesis of the minority on the school issue, was elected for the federal liberal party of Laurier. He was elected for Winnipeg. Martin had quite a checkered career, losing several elections. However, he arguably holds the Canadian record for being elected in the largest number of jurisdictions. He sat in the Manitoba Legislature, in the Canadian House of Commons, became Premier of British Columbia and finished his parliamentary career in the British House of Commons. The presence of Martin in the Liberal caucus in Ottawa did nothing to endear the Catholic Church to the Liberal cause.
- 1894, February 20 The Supreme Court of Canada handed its decision in the

Brophy case. The Court was divided on the issue. However, the majority considered that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council had disposed of the issue in holding that no constitutional right had been prejudicially affected by the school laws. As appeal to the federal government in education could only be made if rights had been denied, the majority felt that no appeal should be allowed in this case. The vote on the case in the Supreme Court was 3-2. An appeal was lodged to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. For this case, the minority was successful in securing the services of Edward Blake to represent it in the judicial proceedings.

1894, March 2 A new Manitoba educational bill (« An Act to Amend the Public Schools Act ») closed loopholes in the bill governing education in Manitoba. Section 151 of the Public Schools Act of 1890 (« any school not conducted according to all the provisions of this or any act in force for the time being, or the regulations of the Department of Education or the Advisory Board, shall not be deemed a public school within the meaning of the law, and such schools shall not participate in the legislative grant ».) was amended by adding to it: « nor the municipal grant, - nor shall any school taxes be collected for the benefit of such schools ». This affected primarily the French Catholic minority who lived in compact and homogeneous settlements and had used the device of municipal taxes to support their theoretically public but, in reality, Catholic schools. A further amendment to the law decreed the confiscation of school property in districts that do not follow the law; as well, in districts where schools have failed to be continued, the municipality would have the duty to take over the school properties.

1894, May A petition signed by the entire Roman Catholic episcopacy requested the disallowance of the amendments to the school acts enacted in March of 1894. The petition also complained of Ordinance No 22 (1892) enacted in the North-West territories.

1894, June 22 Archbishop Taché died.

1894, July 26 Response of the federal government to the petition of the episcopacy. The government expressed the view « that the statements which are contained in this memorial are matter of deep concern and solicitude in the interests of the Dominion at large, and that it is a matter of the utmost importance to the people of Canada that the laws which prevail in any portion of the Dominion should not be such as to occasion complaint of oppression or injustice to any class or portion of the people, but should be recognized as establishing perfect freedom and equality, especially in all matters relating to religion and religious belief and practice ». The

document expressed the « most earnest hope » that the governments of Manitoba and of the North West would take into consideration the complaints of the minority.

1894, October 20 Response of the Government of Manitoba to the federal government Report of July 26. It rejected the basis upon which the petition of the episcopacy had been written. In their reply, the Manitoba government asserted that the public schools are not Protestant but, rather, non sectarian. They rejected the contention that Catholics are compelled to pay for the education of Protestants. Overall, « The Catholic people have the same power to avail themselves of the advantages of the schools as the Protestant people. The religious exercises are non-sectarian, and are not used, except with the sanction and with the direction of the trustees, elected by all ratepayers without distinction of creed. » According to the government of Manitoba, the questions raised in the petition of the bishops, and in the federal report, have had considerable discussion over the years in the Legislature of Manitoba and « that body has advisedly enacted educational legislation which gives to every citizen equal rights and equal privileges, and makes no distinction respecting nationality and religion ». Further, it asserted that the legislation was constitutional and that disallowance « would be a most unjustifiable attempt to prevent the legislature from performing that duty which has been judicially declared to appertain to it, and it may be assumed that such disallowance would call forth an emphatic protest ». In conclusion, it warned that « The Government and Legislative Assembly would unitedly resist by every constitutional means any such attempt to interfere with their provincial autonomy ».

1894, late part of the year As Paul Crunican shows in his book *Priests and Politicians: Manitoba Schools and the election of 1896*, pp. 55-63 the Liberal Party, and Laurier, were just as divided and perturbed as the Conservatives were on the issue of the Manitoba schools. It is also apparent that Laurier, at this stage, accepted the argument that the non-sectarian schools of Manitoba were really Protestant schools in disguise.

1894, December 11-13 Arguments were heard by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the Brophy case,

1894, December 12 Sir John Thompson died of a heart attack, in London, at a reception held by Queen Victoria. Thompson, a convert to Roman Catholicism at a time when tolerance was not seen as a virtue, had not been as supportive of the Catholic cause as the minority had hoped at the outset. He was fearful to be accused of favoritism

towards Catholics. His successor, Mackenzie Bowell, had been the Grand Master of the Orange Lodge in Canada. The Orange Lodge, a militant Protestant organization, was imported from Ireland originally. It was anti-Catholic and associated with a good deal of prejudice and social violence in Canada. At first, in Canada, its targets had been the Roman Catholic Church and the Irish immigrants that followed it. Eventually, as inevitably it had to be, given the demographics of Catholicism in Canada, French Canadians became its main focus of attention. Surprisingly, Bowell, although some might not agree with this, probably did more for the Roman Catholic cause in Manitoba than Thompson had. He too was afraid to be accused of favoritism...

1895, January 29 The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council pronounced, through Lord Watson, in favor of the minority in the Brophy case. Rights established by law, after the Union with Canada, had been prejudicially affected. Thus, the Federal government and Parliament had the right to receive the appeal of the minority and to issue a Remedial Order or Law to the extent that these may be required. Whether or not the federal government and parliament would intervene was a matter for them to decide. However, the main impact of the Brophy decision was that the federal authorities would now have to confront their responsibilities. To this point, the federal government had attempted to diffuse the issue, and safeguard its political fortune, by relegating the matter to the courts. Now, after nearly five years, the end of the road had come and the issue would take on a completely political complexion. The question was simple: would the federal government and Parliament stand by the minority and uphold their constitutional right? However, while the question was simple, the answer was not.

1895, February Long cabinet discussions and indecision about what it should do under the circumstances. Some were favorable for the government to make its bed and to go to the people with their decision; others desired that a session of parliament be called and the issue of remedial legislation be dealt with.

1895, March 4 Beginning of the hearings before the Privy Council to argue about the advisability of issuing a Remedial Order. The star witnesses to debate the two sides of the issue were John S. Ewart and D'Alton McCarthy. The hearings had originally been scheduled to start on February 26 but were delayed at the request of McCarthy.

1895, March 14 A letter was sent to all Canadian bishops by Cardinal Ledochowski, secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the

Propagation of the Faith in Rome. The Catholic doctrine in connection to neutral schools was emphasized and the actions of the Canadian bishops in the Manitoba schools were strongly approved. This document was quoted frequently in the years following the Remedial Order.

- 1895, March 19 Report to the federal government by the Committee of the Privy Council, under the leadership of Charles Hibbert Tupper, Minister of Justice, recommending that a Remedial Order be issued. (Charles Hibbert was the son of Sir Charles Tupper, the Father of Confederation and Prime Minister in 1896) The Report stated that: « In the opinion of the Committee « The Manitoba Act » as construed with regard to the present case by the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council, so clearly points to a duty devolving upon Your Excellency in Council that no course is open consistent with both the letter and the spirit of the constitution other than that recommended. To dismiss this appeal would [...] deny to the Roman Catholic minority rights substantially guaranteed to them under the constitution of Canada [...] »
- 1895, March 19 Adélarde Langevin was consecrated archbishop of St. Boniface. Langevin was 39 years old upon assuming his new post.
- 1895, March 21 The Remedial Order was issued; the government and legislature of Manitoba were to amend the school laws of the Province taking into consideration the rights and privileges mentioned in paragraphs (a) (b) and (c) of the Remedial Order. These paragraphs touched on: (a) « The right to build, maintain, equip, manage, conduct and support Roman Catholic schools, in the manner provided for by the said statutes which were repealed by the two Acts of 1890 aforesaid. (b) The right to share proportionately in any grant made out of the public funds for the purposes of education. (c) The right of (exemption) of such Roman Catholics, as contribute to Roman Catholic schools, from all payment or contribution to the support of any other schools. »
- 1895, March 22 First cabinet crises. The Minister of Justice, Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper resigned from the cabinet to protest the calling of a session of Parliament. Tupper felt that the government should have gone directly to the people. On March 28, at the prodding of his father and of the Governor-General, Lord Aberdeen, Charles Hibbert returned to the cabinet. The Parliamentary session opened on April 18.
- 1895, March 25 A telegram sent by Mackenzie Bowell, the Prime Minister of Canada, to John Schultz, the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba,

who was to pass it on to the Greenway government made it clear that the Remedial Order could be modified. Greenway was told: « Any arrangement he can make will be acceptable ». This message was apparently repeated in several private letters of Bowell in the next two months.

1895, April 17 At a by-election held in Verchères riding, in Quebec, the conservative candidate was defeated by the liberal one, C. A. Geoffrion. The government had wished to make of this election a test of popularity of their Manitoba policy; it had also attempted to heavily involve the Roman Catholic bishops into the political fight. This was to no avail. Verchères was a traditional liberal riding and it remained faithful to its political leanings.

1895, April 19 Schultz sought the opinion of J. G. Bourinot, prominent constitutional expert in Canada, on the constitutional position of the Manitoba Government in light of the Remedial Order. In his report, Bourinot made it clear that Manitoba's choice was between allowing education to pass from its hands into those of the federal government or « in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the constitutional law, as judicially determined, adopt such remedial measures as will remove the admitted grievances of the Roman Catholic minority [...] ». The latter choice would « exhibit their desire to do full justice to every class [...] at the same time give conclusive evidence of their readiness to submit to the deliberate judgment of the courts in every case ». See Crunican, *Priests and Politicians ...*, p. 65.

1895, June 24 In a private letter to Clarke Wallace, Grand Master of the Orange Lodge of Canada, and which captured the spirit of the time, J. A. Donaldson wrote: « The French are becoming too cheeky and so are the Catholics of Ontario as well as Manitoba. *The Orange Body is the only power to keep them where they ought to be* ».

1895, June 25 (the document was leaked to the press on June 15) The government and legislature of Manitoba responded to the Remedial Order. Essentially, they argued that one of the reasons for abolishing the Catholic system had been the inefficiency of these schools. To restore them would result in similar inefficiency with « the result of leaving a large section of the population with no better means of education than was thus supplied (and with the consequence that) many people grew up in a state of illiteracy. » As well, taxes were heavy because « of the great extent of the country » with such a small population resulting in problems. Further, the example of the Roman Catholics would be followed by other groups (Anglicans, Mennonites, Icelanders etc.) and « would

so impair our present system that any approach to even our present general standard of efficiency would be quite impossible ». They pointed out that the decision of the federal government to issue the Remedial Order was not based on « full and accurate information ». They promised to assist the government in a full investigation of the subject; they begged that no hasty decision be taken. Lastly, they raised legal and constitutional points centering on the levying of taxes. The cornerstone of the last point was their assertion that the federal government did not have the constitutional right to force a provincial legislature to spend money in ways the legislature did not agree with. The effect of the last point was that any action of the federal government would have to be supplemented « by voluntary action of the provincial legislature ». Clearly, such action by Manitoba would not be forthcoming. In short, the government and legislature of Manitoba refused to obey the Remedial Order while, in conclusion, begging « to place on record our continued loyalty to Her Gracious Majesty and to the laws which the Parliament of Great Britain has in its wisdom seem fit to enact for the good government of Canada ».

1895, June-July Pressure was exerted in Quebec on the Roman Catholic bishops to come out strongly and openly in favor of the government's Remedial Order. This generated considerable tension within the Conservative Party. The government was confronted with the question of whether or not it would move to introduce a remedial law during the current session of Parliament.

1895, July 8-12 Second cabinet crises. The Bowell government decided that it would make further approaches to the Manitoba government (see the Order in Council below) and that, only should these fail, a Remedial Law would be presented to Parliament at a special session to commence on January 3, 1896. Clerical discontent and pressure with this move led the three French Canadian representatives in the Cabinet to resign: Joseph-Adolphe Caron, Joseph-Aldéric Ouimet and Auguste-Réal Angers. The situation was so desperate for the Bowell government that, on July 10, he informed the Governor-General that he would likely have to resign, not having control of the majority in the House any more. However, Caron and Ouimet were persuaded to return to the cabinet by July 12, although this was not the case for Angers who was the ultramontane representative in the cabinet. About this cabinet crisis, and the position of the three French Canadian ministers, abbé Groulx wrote in his *L'enseignement français au Canada. Les écoles des minorités*, p. 108: « One man held among his cabinet colleagues unquestioned prestige, was preventing the worse of mistakes, contained the divisive forces. In the period after the first

judgment of the Privy Council, when the leaders of both national parties inclined to follow the example of Pontius Pilate, he did more than anybody else to prevent the burial of the school issue and to reserve for the vanquished right some means of revenge. Unfortunately, on July 8 1895, the Honorable Auguste-Réal Angers, because it is he we are discussing here, resigned from the cabinet. He quitted the government the day before the decree that followed the Order in Council; his resignation was to protest the humiliating course followed by the government. Two of his colleagues followed him: the Honorable Aldéric Ouimet and Sir A.-P. Caron. We can say that, at that moment, the Quebec conservative members of Parliament held within their hands the fate of the government. Whoever would have proposed to them immediate action in Parliament, even if this had been Mr. Laurier, would have unanimously rallied them. For the three ministers that had resigned the moment afforded them a great opportunity to spare their party from making a mistake beyond repair. Supported by the solid block of their followers, they only had to persevere in their attitude and, in all probability, the disastrous decree would have been shelved forever, and a remedial law would have been presented, and voted by a significant majority, during the session of 1895. Unfortunately, after only three days of mutiny, Messers Caron and Ouimet returned to the fold, contrite and repentant. Mr. Laurier did not make a gesture to rally them. More disoriented than ever, the Quebec conservative party continued to be divided. »

1895, July 11-17 Two debates were held in the Canadian Parliament over the Manitoba issue. The second was on a motion of non-confidence by Laurier who managed to remain non-committed throughout the process.

1895, July 27 A new Order in Council was issued by the Federal Government. In it, the Government stated that the Remedial Order, and Manitoba's response to it, « has vested the Federal Legislature with complete jurisdiction in the premises ». However, instead of forging ahead, the federal government proceeded to weaken its position by writing: « it by no means follows that it is the duty of the Federal Government to insist that provincial legislation, to be mutually satisfactory, should follow the exact lines of this order. » And, in case the last sentence be interpreted to mean that the contemplated Remedial Law might require of the provincial legislature to do *more* than the Remedial order had required, the document added: « It is hoped, however, that a middle course will commend itself to the local authorities, that federal action may become unnecessary ». In consequence, the federal government announced that it sought further the counsel of Manitoba with a

view of coming to an agreement without having to resort to a Remedial Law, would not institute in the present session such a law and would not do so until January of 1896, and wished to ascertain what amendments to the education acts Manitoba was prepared to make.

1895, September Rumors circulated that the creation a third party was being discussed.

1895, Fall Efforts of the Bowell government to replace Angers in the cabinet were not successful. Senator Alphonse Desjardins and Joseph A. Chapleau were considered.

1895, October 8 Laurier made his famous « sunny way » speech at Morrisburg, Ontario. For a full understanding of this issue, see the documentary section at the site.

1895, Late Fall Further rumors of anti-Bowell cabinet intrigues circulated. These centered on Charles Tupper becoming the new prime minister.

1895, November 26 Mgr. Bégin, administrator of the diocese of Quebec, reported having met Laurier on two occasions recently. He reports that Laurier was putting forward the idea of a commission of investigation to prepare, and change, Protestant opinion in view of making them accept remedial legislation. Laurier would have said that even if the Conservatives ever issue a remedial law that they would not be able to make it work. He stated that the Liberals would be the ones to resolve the school issue and that « they would solve it in a way that would give satisfaction to the Catholics of Manitoba. » Laurier claimed that he could obtain that the Greenway government abandon the unjust measures against the minority more easily than the Conservatives. Bégin concluded in quoting Laurier as saying: « He recognized perfectly that the minority has justified grievances and that the Federal Government must intervene ». While these sentiments were sobering for Bégin, one is struck with the ambiguous nature of the commitment by Laurier. Bégin was likely to read into these statements more than Laurier was probably committing himself for.

1895, December 2 Archbishop Langevin appointed Father Albert Lacombe to represent him as a liaison with the other Catholic bishops. He will also be the voice, and the ears, of Langevin with the federal government.

1895, December 12 The Conservative party won a by-election in Ontario North.

However the successful candidate, J. A. McGillivray, was reported to have campaigned against remedial legislation. In three other by-elections held over the next two weeks, the Liberals won both Quebec contests, although these seats had been held previously by the Conservative Party, and in the Ontario seat of Caldwell a supporter of D'Alton McCarthy won against the official conservative candidate while the Liberal candidate finished a distant last. The clergy had stayed out of the Quebec elections.

1895, December 20 Nearly five months after its July Order in Council, the federal government received its response from Manitoba. Essentially, as the government of Canada had not explained to Manitoba why, without having carried out an investigation, it had issued the Order in Council and, thus, ordered the « re-establishment of separate schools for the Roman Catholic minority in Manitoba », the government and legislature of the province after « full and careful consideration » reached the conclusion that there was not sufficient reason to change their policy. Manitoba again invited the federal authorities to investigate the matter but, otherwise, refused to obey the federal government. It concluded with the following: « It seems, therefore, most reasonable to conclude that by leaving the question to be so dealt with, the truest interests of the minority will be better served than by any attempt to establish a system of separate schools by coercive legislation. Such a system, discredited as it is, will be from the outset crippled by reason of insufficient pecuniary support and ineffective educational equipment and will be an injury rather than a benefit to those whom it is intended to serve ». The Manitoba document was signed by Clifford Sifton.

1896, January 2 The Speech from the Throne announced that a remedial law would be submitted to the Parliament of Canada.

1896, January 4 Third cabinet crises: the « Nest of Traitors ». Seven English-speaking Protestant ministers resigned from the government (George Foster, Arthur Dickey, John G. Haggart, Walter Humphries Montague, Charles Hibbert Tupper, William Bullock Ives and John Fisher Wood) ostensibly because of the failure of the government to replace Angers in the cabinet but in reality because they wanted Bowell out. Behind this palace revolt loomed the figure of Charles Tupper, Sr.; Bowell had strong allies in the Aberdeens who detested the elder Tupper. They twice refused to accept Bowell's resignation.

1896, January 13 Mackenzie Bowell managed to survive politically. Senator Alphonse Desjardins was taken into the government. Bowell agreed to take back the bolting ministers (except C. H. Tupper), Sir

Charles Tupper would come back to lead the party in the House of Commons over the remedial bill. Finally, Tupper Senior committed himself to a remedial bill and would lead the Conservatives into the next general elections. Paul Crunican comments (p. 157): « For the reconstructed government, the final impression left by the long debate was one of profound vulnerability. » Another effect of the crisis had been to delay the Remedial bill further. Father Lacombe was very active, at the request of Bowell, in trying to help the government through these difficulties, especially in convincing Desjardins to join the government.

- 1896, January 15 In provincial elections held in Manitoba, the Greenway Liberal government was returned to power with 30 seats, the opposition Conservatives won six (five according to Lovell Clark), two independent Liberals and two Patrons of Industry were also elected.
- 1896, January 20 Father Lacombe sent his famous letter to Laurier. The letter was interpreted by Laurier as a declaration of war. See the documentary section about the content, and context, of this letter.
- 1896, January 27 The Liberal Party won a by-election in Charlevoix, Quebec, a seat they held previously. The Liberal majority was substantially reduced. This by-election was seen as crucial by both national political parties. In the course of the election, the Bishop of Chicoutimi, Mgr. Labrecque, in whose diocese Charlevoix was situated, issued a Pastoral Letter to his clergy, on January 24, and which was to be read, without comment, in church. In it, Bishop Labrecque stated: « We regard as a grave duty of conscience for the electors to only give their vote to a candidate who will formally and solemnly pledge to vote, in the current session, for a remedial law that will have been approved by the ecclesiastical authorities ». In a move that was to foretell what happened in the general elections held later in the year, both candidates pledged themselves to vote for such legislation. The Liberals charged that many of the lower clergy had been quite active on the part of the Conservative Party. The result of the Charlevoix by-election were debated at length by the press in Quebec for weeks afterward.
- 1896, February 11 Sir Charles Tupper entered the House of Commons, having just been elected at a by-election in Cape Breton.
- 1896, February 11 First reading of the « Remedial Act » in the House of Commons. The Act was introduced by A. R. Dickey, the Minister of Justice. Essentially, the Remedial Bill restored the separate school

system. A Separate School Board, containing up to nine Roman Catholic members, was created to govern the Catholic schools. Appointment to this Board was to be made by the Lieutenant-Governor (in fact the Government of Manitoba), and if that was not done, the federal government would do it within three months. Trustees would be elected in the school districts and would be empowered to raise taxes among Catholic ratepayers; Catholics could support the public schools if they wished to do so. Catholics who supported the separate schools would be exempted from supporting the public schools. Catholic schools would be subjected to a system of double inspection, one from Catholic inspectors and one from the government. If held to be inefficient, the government grant could be denied to such schools. The choice of textbooks to be used was left to the separate Board of Education. However, the books had to be chosen from among the books used in the public schools of Manitoba or the separate schools of Ontario. Teachers would have to meet the same standards of qualification as the teachers in the public schools. Clause 74 provided that the separate schools would receive a proportionate grant from the provincial government.

1896, February 17 In a communication to Mgr. Bégin, administrator of the diocese of Quebec, Mgr. Langevin expressed dissatisfaction with the remedial bill, especially with the clauses dealing with textbooks and taxes.

1896, February 18 Louis A. Paquet, eminent theologian, defended clerical intervention into politics in connection to the Manitoba school question. See the documentary section for the text of this intervention. The liberal newspaper, *L'Électeur*, edited by Laurier's friend, Ernest Pacaud, argued that even if all of the bishops approved of the Remedial Act, the politicians, the press and the electors would still have the right to oppose it. In his opinion, the bishops did not have the « mission to judge alone the means of solving a problem that was both political and religious ». These views were echoed again in *L'Électeur* on February 19, this time by Fernand Rinfret, a Member of Parliament, who was the parliamentary correspondent of the newspaper and in the *Cultivateur*, edited by Joseph-Israel Tarte, the right-hand man of Laurier in Quebec.

1896, February 21 It was moved that debate on the second reading of the Remedial Bill begin on March 3.

1896, February 21 *L'Électeur* published the letter of threat that Lacombe had sent to Laurier (see January 20). Huge controversy followed.

- 1896, February 22 Subjected to considerable pressure to do so, Mgr. Langevin expressed satisfaction with the remedial bill. However, he also pointed out that he expected amendments to it when it would go into committee. Knowledge of the reticence of Langevin to the bill fuelled Liberal objections to the law.
- 1896, March 3 Debates on the second reading of the Remedial Act began in the House of Commons. The debate was extensive in scope lasting several days, all day, and in the last stretch, all day and all night. Members relayed each other, in shifts, so that discussion would continue and neither side be caught by a surprised move from the other side. To Tupper, Father of Confederation and now effectively the leader of the government, the issue was not one of separate schools, it was « a question of the constitution of the country ». In amendment, Laurier moved « the Bill be not now read the second time but that it be read the second time this day six months »; this is what is called the « six months' hoist ». This is the ordinary parliamentary way to indicate that one does not wish to see a measure discussed and dealt with.
- 1896, March 13 A letter received from cardinal Ledochowski defined the Roman view of what the obligations and the responsibilities of Catholic Members of Parliament and voters.
- 1896, March 14 Langevin reiterated his approval of the Remedial Bill in a letter addressed to Father Lacombe. Lacombe had urged Langevin to do so.
- 1896, March 20 The Remedial bill was carried in its second reading by a majority of 18 (112 to 94). The government was supported by 105 of its own members and seven Liberals. Voting against the Remedial bill were 73 Liberals, 18 Conservatives and three supporters of McCarthy. According to Lovell Clark, counting pairs, 19 Conservatives voted against the bill, all but one of these were from Ontario. The Laurier six months' hoist motion was defeated 115 to 91. According to Paul Crunican, p.206, the debate in second motion covered 1400 columns of Hansard. The nominal index to the debate covers 14 separate pages. Following these votes, as per the normal procedure followed by the House, the Bill was sent to Committee for closer examination. There, the bill met with many suggestions of amendment and delay, known in parliamentary language as "filibustering", from the Conservative opponents and the Liberal Party. A further 1600 columns of debate were added at this stage (p. 232).

- 1896, March 17 In a final move to arrive at an agreement with the Government of Manitoba without having to pass the Remedial Act, the federal government informed by telegram the provincial government that it was sending a deputation (the members of the group were: A. R. Dickey, the Minister of Justice, Alphonse Desjardins, a senator who was Minister of Militia, and Donald Smith, a Member of Parliament) to negotiate a settlement with the government of Manitoba. Serious reports indicate that it was Sir Donald Smith who insisted that one last attempt at conciliation be made. Smith made the peace mission a condition to his continued support of the Remedial Bill. In a brochure written in November of 1896, A. Bernard charged that it was the Governor-General that forced Tupper, under threat of dissolution of the House, to undertake such a mission.
- 1896, March 23 The deputation left for Manitoba. They arrived there on the evening of the 25.
- 1896, March 27 By Order in Council, the federal government declared that « the delegation are hereby given full power to effect an arrangement with the Government of Manitoba on such terms as shall be satisfactory to the said minority ».
- 1896, March 28 The Federal government, through its deputation, offered the following terms to resolve the school issue (as given in the confidential memorandum): 1. In towns and villages where there are 25 residents of school age, or in cities where there are 50 such children, the board of trustees would arrange for a school house or room be put at their disposal « where they may be taught by a Roman Catholic teacher ». 2. 10 Roman Catholics may appeal to the provincial government from decisions of the Boards in respect to matters discussed under the clause above. 3. In schools where the majority of children are Catholics, they would be exempted from the requirements of the religious exercises under the regulations. 4. In Catholic schools, only textbooks that do not offend the views of the minority would be used. 5. Catholics would be provided representation on the Advisory Board. 6. Catholics would have representation on the Board of Examiners. 7. Assistance would be provided to Catholics for the maintenance of a normal school (teachers' training school). 8. The existing system of permits to non-qualified teachers in Catholic schools would be continued for a further two years, to enable them to qualify. 9. « In all other respects the schools at which Catholics attend to be public schools and subject to every provision of the Education Acts for the time being in force in Manitoba ». When the necessary legislation would be passed by Manitoba, the Remedial Bill would be withdrawn by

the federal government.

Commenting in a letter to Mgr. Bégin about the present situation, Mgr. Langevin wrote: (translation) « Evidently the government has served us very badly; its protracted and frequent delays have hurt us as much as the opposition of the Liberals has - If, as one might expect, the Conference does not give us satisfaction and if the Remedial Bill is not passed in Ottawa I am of the opinion (I very much wish to know your opinion on this point) that we should remain neutral during the next elections - If we have not a law presently, it is the fault of the Liberals who have voted against the remedial bill - but it is also that of the Government - How can we defend it? » Langevin eventually changed his mind about this.

While not directly represented at the conference between the federal delegates and the Manitoba government, Langevin was kept fully apprised of the situation.

1896, March 30 In a long memorandum, the government of Manitoba, represented by Clifford Sifton and J. D. Cameron, declared that « we regret that we are unable to accede to the terms of the proposition submitted to us. A study of its details reveals the fact that it involves much more than would appear at first sight ». They argued that the separate schools would be inferior, that they would be compulsory in districts that met the assigned quota of children, that in many cases it would be impossible to provide a separate building for them and that separation within the same building would be even worse, that the financial objections were serious, that the plan would be unworkable. Further, they objected to the legislature and the government being deprived of the control of the schools as to religious exercises and wondered what would happen to non-Catholic children in schools where the majority was Catholic. They were amenable, if other points were satisfactorily resolved, to discuss textbooks, representation on the Advisory Board, on the Board of Examiners and on the issue of teachers' permits. However, they rejected supporting the separate normal school and they demanded the withdrawing of the Remedial Bill as a precondition to their changing the school legislation. In any case, they pointed out that the legislature could not meet before April 16. In their judgment « it will be seen from the above remarks that the plan proposed involves the establishment of a state aided denominational system of separate schools, which in practical effect would carry with it the evils of the system which prevailed prior to 1890, and would also involve grave additional evils and difficulties of which we have not hitherto had experience ».

Their objections they summarized in the following manner: 1. « The statutory division of the people into separate denominational classes. 2. The necessary inferiority of the separate school. 3. Impairment of the efficiency of the public schools through division of school revenues. 4. The burdening of non-Catholic ratepayers by compelling them to maintain separate schools. 5. The according of special privileges to one denomination which could not on principle be denied to all others, but which in practice could not be granted to such others without entire destruction of the school system ».

What did the government of Manitoba have to offer to settle the issue? 1. To completely secularize the public schools by eliminating religious exercises and teaching during school hours. 2. Relegating religious exercises and teaching to between 3h.30 and 4h.00 in the afternoon if authorized by a resolution voted by the majority of the trustees of a district. 3. No child would be present at such religious teaching if the parents objected. 4. Where room would permit, for these religious exercises and teaching, the children could be physically divided into different rooms. The report concluded: « We believe that the foregoing proposals will remove any well-founded grievance. If the objection of the minority be that the schools are Protestant, as alleged in some of their petitions, than the objection can be fully and finally disposed of by complete secularization. If the real objection be the desire to have along with efficiency, secular education, proper religious training, than the second plan proposed offers an effective method of attaining the object desired. In fact it is difficult to conceive what better plan could be proposed even were we dealing with a system of schools entirely Catholic ».

1896, March 31 In a long answer, the federal negotiating team rejected the response by the government of Manitoba and stated: « We deeply regret that you have felt obliged to reject our proposition, and with all deference it does not appear to us that the objections, general and special, which you urge are such as necessarily involve so serious a step. »

1896, April 1 Response by the government of Manitoba to the March 31 document. Essentially, Manitoba recognized that the two sides were at cross purposes: the federal proposals were predicated on the view that the Roman Catholics of Manitoba had a right to separate schools and that, consequently, the Manitoba laws had infringed on such rights while the Government of Manitoba felt that no such right existed. In consequence, its course of action had been to seek to remove practical objections « to the present system without giving a legal right to separate » and « while joining with you in the earnest desire to reach a settlement, we are unable

to suggest any way of reconciling these two propositions ». In other words, there was no point in continuing the discussions. The federal negotiating team returned to Ottawa.

- 1896, April 5 Mgr. Émard issued a Pastoral Letter on the « Electoral duty » of his flock. See the documentary section for details on this document and for reactions to it.
- 1896, April 13 Acceptance of the Remedial Bill by Mgr Langevin was signified for the third time. It was read into the record of the House of Commons by Tupper on April 14.
- 1896, April 15 So far, only 14 of the 112 clauses of the Remedial bill have been voted on.
- 1896, April 21 The bill was withdrawn as the maximum life of the House (5 years) was about to run out within about one week and budget appropriations had to be made.
- 1896, April 23 Parliament was dissolved and elections were called for June 23.
- 1896, April 23 Mgr. Émard opposed a specific and binding collective pastoral letter for the upcoming elections. Discussion of the views of Émard among the Quebec bishops showed that they were very divided as to what means to use to achieve the result of justice for the Catholics of Manitoba.
- 1896, April 27 Mackenzie Bowell resigned as Prime Minister. Lord Aberdeen, Governor-General of Canada, was forced to call on Charles Tupper to form the new government. Aberdeen had done his best to keep Tupper out of the PM job to this point in time.
- 1896, May 1 The Tupper cabinet was completed. The French Canadian members of the new government were all of the ultramontane persuasion: A. R. Angers, back into the cabinet after his resignation of the year before, Alphonse Desjardins, Louis-Olivier Taillon and John Jones Ross. By these appointments, Tupper probably wished to solidify the support of the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Quebec. He gambled on the ultramontane horse at the time when Quebecers were steadily moving in the direction of Laurier, of less clerical involvement in their political affairs. Five of the 17 members of the Tupper government were drawn from the Senate.
- 1896, May 4 Sir Oliver Mowat, Premier of Ontario for nearly 24 years, accepted to join the Laurier Liberal team (although he was not a candidate in

the general elections). Mowat was very popular among Roman Catholics, having protected the Separate Schools of Ontario against the frequent attacks of the Protestant extremists. The Laurier team also had Sir Richard William Scott who, as a member of the Legislature of the United Province of Canada, in 1863, had sponsored the « Scott bill », essentially creating the separate schools of Ontario. Thus, as the elections of 1896 were under way, the Liberal Party had given itself a great deal of credibility with Roman Catholics in Canada.

- 1896, May 6 The Roman Catholic bishops of Quebec met in Montreal to hammer out a consensus on the proposed joint pastoral letter giving guidance to the faithful on their electoral duty in the present elections. Mgr. Émard of Valleyfield, and Mgr Fabre of Montreal, urged caution and opposed a letter that would not leave their flock free to vote according to the dictates of their conscience. The other 10 archbishops and bishops wished the document to be binding on the faithful, demanding that they only support candidates that would pledge to issue a remedial bill. A compromise document, written by Mgr. Bégin, was adopted.
- 1896, May 7 Laurier made his famous St. Roch speech. See the documentary section on this point.
- 1896, May 17 The joint Pastoral Letter of the bishops and archbishops of the ecclesiastical provinces of Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa was issued. See the documentary section.
- 1896, May-June All but 2 or 3 of Roman Catholic candidates in the elections in Quebec, all from the Liberal party - including Laurier - made in writing « solemn pledges » to bring justice to the Manitoba minority. See the Fitzpatrick pledge in the documentary section.
- 1896, May 17 Bishop Laflèche delivered his famous anti-Laurier sermon. There was strong adverse reaction from the Liberal Party and *L'Électeur* expressed irreverent comments about Laflèche. See the documentary section.
- 1896, June 6 Under a banner headline of « Shameful trafficking in religion », *L'Électeur* attacked viciously Mgr. Laflèche.
- 1896, June 9 The June 6 article in *l'Électeur* brought a sharp rebuke from Mgr. Bégin. *L'Électeur* was threatened with ecclesiastical sanctions. The letter from Bégin to the newspaper was published in the newspaper on June 11.

- 1896, June 12 Laurier made an important campaign speech at Massey Hall, Toronto. The statement was in contrast to the one given at St. Roch. See the documentary section.
- 1896, June 21 *L'Électeur* editorialized that « the electoral campaign has taken the character of a type of holy war (...) Never before had our country witnessed such criminal and scandalous exploitation of religion ».
- 1896, June 23 The federal elections brought Wilfrid Laurier to power. To many, the more surprising elements were the size of the Liberal victory in Quebec and the fact that the Conservatives won Manitoba. According to Father Charland, « the French-Canadian episcopate was deeply humiliated by the results of the federal elections of June 23, 1896. (p. 234) » *Le Courrier du Canada* wrote: « The Catholics of the Province turned a deaf ear to the voice of the episcopate ». As for *La Patrie* it cheerfully concluded on the 24th: « Yesterday, the clergy suffered a more humiliating defeat than the Conservative Party itself in the Province of Quebec ». Among the Conservative casualties in Quebec were three cabinet ministers: Angers, Taillon and Desjardins, aside from Hector Langevin, the Father of Confederation. Caron, who had been ignored by Tupper in forming his cabinet, won in Trois-Rivières. Another surprising result was the conservative victory of J.-G.-H. Bergeron against Joseph-Israel Tarte, Laurier's right-hand man in Quebec. Bergeron was the incumbent member but this riding was situated within Mgr. Émard's diocese. For statistical details on the election results, see the documentary section.
- 1896, July Judge Adolphe-Basile Routhier was sent by the Laurier government to Manitoba to meet with the principals and open preliminary discussion for the settlement of the Manitoba school issue.
- 1896, July 8 A letter from Ledochowski was received by archbishop Bégin. It commented on the joint pastoral letter issued by the bishops during the elections. While the cardinal approved of the principle of issuing a letter of guidance for the faithful, and of the general tone of it, he criticized the specific commitment that candidates were required to make, and the « grave sin » attached to those that would not conform.
- 1896, July 9 Mgr. Langevin wrote to Wilfrid Laurier to assure him he would cooperate with his government as he had cooperated with the former government.

- 1896, August Three members of the Greenway cabinet, including Clifford Sifton, came to Ottawa to negotiate with a federal cabinet group a settlement of the school question. A component of these discussions was the desire of Laurier to bring Sifton into his own government.
- 1896, August (?) L. O. David published a brochure entitled *Le clergé canadien, sa mission, son oeuvre*. In it, David complained of the all too frequent, and inopportune, intervention of the clergy into political affairs in Quebec, especially against the Liberal Party in the last elections. David was a well-known liberal and a friend of Laurier. A second part announced in the brochure, to contain « sensational facts » about clerical interference in some elections, was never published. See the documentary section.
- 1896, September 11 Jean-Baptiste Proulx, parish priest for St. Lin (this was the parish where Laurier was born), departed for Rome. Officially, he was to represent the Franco-Americans of Danielson in their quarrel with the bishop of Hartford, Connecticut. In reality, he was sent to Rome by Laurier and the Liberals to complain about the Church's interference in Canadian politics, especially as demonstrated in the last federal elections. This mission became public knowledge from September 17. Abbé Proulx put together a collection of documents, from a variety of sources, with his own footnotes as comments (*Documents pour servir à l'intelligence de la question des écoles du Manitoba*, Rome, Befani Printer, 1896). See the documentary section for material on this mission.
- 1896, Sept. 23-30 and October 1 The newspaper *L'Électeur*, official newspaper of the Liberal Party in Quebec City, basking in post election victory, reproduced the brochure by L. O. David, *Le clergé canadien, sa mission, son oeuvre*.
- 1896, Fall Gustave Drolet, formerly a pontifical zouave, left for Rome to present the Liberal case against the Church. On September 17, Laurier denied, in the House of Commons that there was an « official mission » sent to Rome.
- 1896, Fall Throughout the fall, several bishops of Quebec went to Rome to present their side of the Manitoba school question and of their role in the elections of June 23. These were Mgrs. Langevin, Bégin, Gravel and Larocque. Further, Mgr. Fabre went as far as Paris where he fell sick; his companion, Canon Archambault proceeded to Rome to represent him.

- 1896, October 45 Catholic liberal Members of Parliament signed a petition to be given to Pope Leo XIII. Mason Wade claims the petition was drafted by Henri Bourassa. See the documentary section.
- 1896, October Louis-Adolphe Paquet prepared a study of the dogmatic errors contained in the brochure *Le clergé canadien* by L. O. David. This analysis was sent to Rome.
- 1896, Oct-Nov Joseph-Israel Tarte, accompanied by Henri Bourassa as his assistant, was sent to Manitoba to negotiate the details of a compromise with the Manitoban government. Tarte met on four occasions with Mgr. Langevin although the latter was not involved in the negotiations for the settlement of the school issue.
- 1896, November 7, 28 Publication, in two parts, of a brochure to respond to the accusations leveled by L. O. David in his *Le clergé canadien*. Written under the pseudonym of P. Bernard, the brochure was entitled *Un manifeste libéral. M. L. O. David et le clergé canadien* (première partie), and *La question des écoles du Manitoba* (deuxième partie). The two parts were then edited together into a small book bearing the same title. The author hiding behind anonymity was Dominique-Ceslas Gonthier, a Dominican priest who was already known for his talents as a polemicist. Were also involved, in the revision of the text: Lionel Lindsay and Louis-Adolphe Paquet, both priests, Thomas Chapais and senator Philippe Landry. See the documentary section of the site.
- 1896, November 16 (as per the dating on the legal document printed in the *Sessional Papers* of 1897; however, the agreement would have been concluded on November 7 according to Rumilly and officially announced on November 19) The Laurier-Greenway Compromise was made. For the text of the agreement, arguments about it and reactions to it, see the documentary section. Both Neatby (*Laurier and a Liberal Quebec*, p. 83) and Crunican (*Priests and Politicians*, p. 318) credit the Laurier-Greenway compromise as being, in some respects, more generous than the offer the Canadian government had made to the government of Manitoba earlier in the year. Only on one point would this *appear* to be the case. However, a careful examination shows that the number of students required to gain access to certain rights was *in fact* likely not as generous in the Laurier-Greenway compromise than in the earlier document. The clause that provided for French was a new feature in the Laurier-Greenway compromise. However, in the rural districts of Manitoba where francophones had been the majority, there had not been problems to have French schools under the legislation of 1890 as the majority francophone trustees provided for it. It is misleading to

present the Laurier-Greenway compromise as generous, or, in any case, as “in some respects” more generous than the March 28 offer of the Canadian government.

1896, November 17 Clifford Sifton was sworn in as Member of the Privy Council. Laurier gave him the post of Minister of the Interior and of Indian Affairs. He became Laurier’s right-hand man in the cabinet and over prairie affairs.

1896, November 23 In a letter jointly addressed to the two envoys, abbé Proulx and Gustave Drolet, Laurier communicated the text of a memoir written by himself and Richard W. Scott to defend the Laurier-Greenway compromise. This memoir was leaked to *Le Soleil* and printed on February 18, 1897. See the documentary section for Laurier’s arguments in defending the compromise.

1896, Nov.-dec. Of all the bishops of Quebec, only Mgr. Émard thought that the Laurier-Greenway had some merit, although, even Mgr. Émard believed that the compromise was insufficient. Charles Fitzpatrick’s comment that only six of the twenty-nine Canadian bishops had protested against the compromise, and which historian Blair Neatby approvingly quotes (see *Laurier and a Liberal Quebec*, p. 86), is not well taken. Several more condemned the compromise in the weeks following. Furthermore, it would be difficult to find **any** that truly supported it. At best, some believed it to be politically expedient. When, in December of 1896, there was a question of signing a joint Pastoral Letter of all the Roman Catholic bishops of Canada to condemn the Laurier-Greenway compromise, **all** of the bishops of the ecclesiastical provinces of Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and St. Boniface were prepared to sign it. The bishops of Ontario, at least those outside of the archdiocese of Ottawa, brought the project to a halt. They shared the views of the other bishops on the unacceptability of the compromise; however, they feared the reaction of the Liberal Party in their province as their own schools depended on the continued support of the Liberals. They preferred to wait for the Papal encyclical before condemning the compromise. None of this indicated any serious support for the compromise within the hierarchy.

In this period of time, Tarte attacked on several occasions Mgr. Langevin who adamantly rejected the compromise; he accused him of inflexibility and prejudice. According to Tarte, Mgr. Langevin was a young man, without experience, who did not represent well the views of the Catholics of Manitoba.

1896, December 6 Felix-Gabriel Marchand, along with 26 liberal members of the

Legislative Assembly and Council of Quebec, drafted a petition for the Pope. In it, they complained of clerical interference in the provincial elections of 1892 and the federal elections of 1896. They specifically requested the appointment of a permanent delegate of the Rome to Canada so as to bring under control the Roman Catholic episcopacy of the country.

1896, December 7 *L'Électeur* published a letter from Mgr. Aloysius Lazzareschi, a Roman prelate, who approved of the brochure by L. O. David, *Le clergé canadien*. P. Bernard (read D.-C. Gonthier) responded by December 15-16 in three newspapers.

1896, December 22 In a joint Pastoral Letter from the bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Quebec (this included the dioceses of Quebec, Chicoutimi, Rimouski, Trois-Rivières and Nicolet) the liberal newspaper *L'Électeur* was condemned. Henceforth, the newspaper was not to be read in these dioceses under pain of « mortal sin » and refusal of the Holy Sacraments. The Pastoral Letter was read in all of the churches of the dioceses on December 27. *L'Électeur* was condemned for its general attitude to the clergy, especially toward Mgr. Laflèche, its publication of the brochure by L. O. David, and for denying that the clergy had the right to intervene in various questions, including in education. See the documentary section.

1896, December 24 Mgr. Labrecque, bishop of Chicoutimi, banned *Le Cultivateur* and *La Patrie*, both liberal newspapers in his diocese.

1896, December 26 Last issue of *L'Électeur*.

1896, December 28 Beginning of publication of the newspaper *Le Soleil* to replace *L'Électeur* as the semi-official mouthpiece of the Liberal Party and Laurier. *Le Soleil* was printed in the same city, on the same presses, with the journalists, in the same format and identical ads as *L'Électeur* had been. It was sent to the same list of subscribers as the former paper had been.

1896, December 28 Newspapers printed the news that the Roman Sacred Congregation had condemned the brochure *Le clergé canadien* by L. O. David and that it has been placed on the Index [list of condemned books for dogmatic errors, dangerous ideas, immorality or blasphemy and which are forbidden to Roman Catholics to read]. Mgr. Bégin, archbishop of Quebec, had already informally heard of the condemnation of the brochure on December 22.

- 1896, December 29 L. O. David published an open letter of submission to the Church. The offensive brochure was withdrawn from distribution and sale.
- 1896, December 30 Mgr. Fabre, archbishop of Montreal, died. Mgr. Fabre had protected abbé Proulx. Abbé Proulx was immediately ordered back to Canada; in fact, his mission had already ended.
- 1897, January 4 Charles Fitzpatrick, a Roman Catholic and the Solicitor-General in the Laurier government, left for Rome to put the Liberal party's case to the Pope. About this mission, see the documentary section.
- 1897, January 9 - February 4 *Le Courrier du Canada*, a conservative and ultramontane newspaper, published anonymously a series of articles. These were put together into a brochure entitled *La question scolaire des écoles du Manitoba - Quelques observations sur le discours de l'Hon. M. Laurier au banquet de Montréal*.
- 1897, January 14 Gustave Drolet had an audience with Pope Leo XIII. The petition of the 45 Members of Parliament was submitted.
- 1897, January 18 Official Church notification in the newspapers of the condemnation of the brochure *Le clergé canadien* by L. O. David. In it we learn that the Holy-Office had condemned the brochure on December 9 and that it was placed on the *Index* on December 19.
- 1897, January 20 At a gathering of all the bishops of Quebec to celebrate Mgr. Moreau of St. Hyacinthe, further discussions were held for a joint pastoral letter to condemn the Laurier-Greenway compromise. Such a document was not issued because of the reticence of Mgr. Émard.
- 1897, January 20 While in London, Charles Fitzpatrick sought and obtained a legal opinion from Edward Blake. Blake submitted that the rights recognized by the Privy Council in the Brophy case were rather narrow; he also affirmed the superiority of the Laurier-Greenway compromise over the Remedial Bill. This opinion was submitted to the authorities of Rome in the hope that they would not accept the Quebec bishops' harsh interpretation of the Laurier-Greenway compromise. This opinion was published in *Le Soleil*, February 15, 1897.
- 1897, Jan 20-Feb. 11 All of the bishops of Quebec, with the exception of Mgr. Émard, issued Circulars to their clergy to condemn the Laurier-Greenway compromise. Large extracts of these are printed

in a brochure entitled *Les droits de l'Église et la « question manitobaine »* published later in 1897 by an author, senator Philippe Landry, who signed « Justitia », (printed by Léger Brousseau, 45p. The extracts are found in pp. 30-43).

- 1897, February Joseph-Israel Tarte's newspaper, *Le Cultivateur*, is now banned in the dioceses of Trois-Rivières, Rimouski, Sherbrooke, Saint-Hyacinthe, Nicolet, Chicoutimi and Quebec (this left only Montreal, Valleyfield and Pontiac).
- 1897, February 1 Mgr. Labrecque bans *Le Soleil* in the diocese of Chicoutimi.
- 1897, early February Charles Fitzpatrick had an audience with the Pope. He obtained a delay on the publication of an encyclical already prepared on the Manitoba school issue as well as the sending of a papal delegate in Canada to investigate.
- 1897, February 18 The liberal newspaper *Le Soleil* published a memorandum drafted by Laurier and Richard W. Scott to justify the Laurier-Greenway Compromise. The document had been presented in Rome by abbé Proulx.
- 1897, February 22 Mgr. Marois, assistant to Mgr. Bégin as administrator of the diocese of Quebec, commissioned Auguste-Réal Angers, Philippe Landry and Tom-Chase Casgrain, all well-known conservative members, to prepare a refutation of the legal opinion of Edward Blake. In the document, they charged that Blake's « was not the opinion of a constitutional lawyer but, rather, the product of a business agent whose client does not wish to submit to the judgment of the tribunal and who, having met the opponent, recommends that the little that is offered be accepted. »
- 1897, February 24 A letter from the Vatican was sent to cardinal Taschereau to inform the bishops of Canada of the coming of a papal delegate.
- 1897, February 27 Upon his return from Rome, Gustave Drolet granted a long interview to *La Presse* on the mission he was sent to accomplish. See the documentary section for more details.
- 1897, February 27 Senator Philippe Landry left for London and Rome to counter the work done by Charles Fitzpatrick.
- 1897, March 1 Mgr. Bégin left for Rome; he represented the other bishops in defending their common cause; he also wished to make certain that an acceptable candidate was appointed to the post of archbishop of Montreal. Strong rumours attributed the post to Mgr.

Émard of Valleyfield. As Émard was well-known for his liberal views, and in fact was the candidate the Laurier government would most have liked to see obtain the seat, the other bishops were concerned. They wanted to make certain that he did not get the post.

1897, March 30 While Mgr. Merry del Val was on his way to Canada, the Manitoba legislature voted the Laurier-Greenway compromise. This virtually ensured that no more concessions would be made and that the papal delegate's mission would, to that extent, be a failure.

1897, March 31 The papal delegate, Mgr. Merry del Val, arrived in Quebec City. He was to have a difficult mission in Canada. In general, the Quebec bishops interpreted his arrival as potentially dangerous for them. They believed that his main task should be to investigate the Manitoba school question and demonstrate that the bishops had acted properly to defend Catholic interests, especially in condemning the Laurier-Greenway compromise. They hoped that he would support their view that Remedial legislation ought to be enacted. At the very least, they expected that the delegate would obtain further concessions from the governments of Canada and Manitoba. On the other side, the Laurier government thought that the main purpose of his presence in Canada was to investigate the « inappropriate » clerical interference into political affairs, and to bring an end to it. They hoped that he would see that the compromise was substantial, adequate, the best that could be obtained under the circumstances and preferable to a Remedial Act. Both sides besieged the delegate while he was in Canada. Merry del Val himself defined the purposes of his presence as follows: « My mission is a mission of peace, destined, if God permits it, to bring back union among the Catholics in Canada, to assure the prestige of the bishops, to firm up the obedience of the faithful and to obtain from the government an acceptable solution for all. »

It was on the occasion of the arrival of the delegate that Israel Tarte made public the letter signed by the 45 Quebec Members of Parliament. In the House, he declared: « This document speaks for itself. Not a word about the Manitoba school question is found in it. We have appealed to Rome about the attitude taken by some members of the Roman Catholic clergy, as we had a right to do. We have requested political freedom. » See the documentary section.

1897, April 8 Meeting of the bishops of the province of Quebec (except Mgr. Moreau who was prevented by health problems), the archbishops

of Halifax, Toronto and Saint-Boniface with Mgr. Merry del Val in Montreal. The delegate criticized Mgr. Labrecque for banning newspapers in his diocese. Mgr. Labrecque refused to remove the ban, as this would undermine his authority in his diocese. He later sent a letter of complaint to Rome (July 6, 1897).

- 1897, April 24 *Le Soleil* editorialized: « the presence of the apostolic delegate among us has revived those that had been intimidated ».
- 1897, May 11 Provincial elections were held in Quebec. Felix-Gabriel Marchand's Liberal Party crushed the Conservative Party by winning 57 seats against 17. The Liberal sway over Quebec, begun by the victory of Laurier the year before, was now complete. This liberal domination of the province was to last a long time: provincially the Liberal Party controlled the majority of the seats in Quebec until 1936. Federally, the majority of the seats of Quebec will go to the Liberal Party until 1984 with the sole exception of the elections of 1958.
- 1897, May 11 Merry del Val met the six bishops of the province of Ontario in Toronto. These bishops concluded that a federal remedial law would be impossible to apply, if ever it could be voted. They believed that the Laurier-Greenway compromise should not be condemned so as not to give rise to Protestant fanaticism. It is following this meeting that the bishops of Quebec decided to send to Rome a delegate to defend their interests.
- 1897, May 19 The bishops of Quebec, except Mgr. Lorrain (Pontiac) and Mgr. Émard who were not consulted, approved of the sending to Rome of Father Dominique-Ceslas Gonthier to represent them « unofficially » in Rome.
- 1897, June All the French-Canadian bishops, except Mgr. Émard, prepared jointly an ultimatum regarding the activities of Mgr. Merry del Val to be submitted to the Vatican through Father Gonthier. They declared that they did not wish to cooperate in arrangements that would sacrifice, even partially, the rights of the Catholic minority of Manitoba. They complained of the activities of the papal delegate and added : « For all these reasons, Holy Father, we consider that the delegation of Mgr. M. del Val is like a true national and religious calamity: national, as it imperils our most precious constitutional rights; religious, as it effects the ruin of Episcopal authority which (the mission) was meant to sustain and consolidate. » They requested that the encyclical force the Liberals to fulfill their promises and to render justice to the minority. Their conclusion expressed loudly the depth of their despair: « If, on the contrary,

because men that hold power today, but might loose it tomorrow, and are held in such consideration, and if, by an excess of confidence in their fruitless promises, the essential rights of the Catholic minority were sacrificed, even if only in part, religion would be greatly imperiled. It would mean an end to our prestige as the shepherds of the souls, and we would have nothing left to do but to sadly lock ourselves within our Episcopal palaces to moan over the remaining shards of our ruined authority and renounce proclaiming and defending the principles and the truths so often propounded in your magisterial encyclicals, i.e. the supremacy of the Church over the State, the necessity of religious schools under the direction of the bishops, the justice and the freedom due to Catholics in all countries. » See Charland, p. 52-53.

- 1897, June 22 A telegram was sent to Mgr. Merry del Val telling him to be ready to return to Rome. The many complaints of the Quebec bishops seemed to have had their effect.
- 1896, June 25 Paul Bruchési was appointed archbishop of Montreal. Liberals who had hoped for the appointment of Mgr. Énard were disappointed. Nevertheless, Bruchési proved to have good relations with the Liberals.
- 1897, July 3 Upon his departure from Canada, Mgr. Merry del Val wrote to Mgr. Langevin that agitation around the school question, and discussion of the matter, was to cease awaiting the papal pronouncement on the matter. This text was made public on July 6.
- 1897, July 15 *Le Soleil* published the December 6 petition by Marchand.
- 1897, July 17 Mgr. Merry del Val departed for Rome from New York. Upon his arrival in London, the Delegate met with Wilfrid Laurier.
- 1897 (specific date unknown) Mgr. Merry del Val wrote his Report on Canadian affairs. (Notes on this are derived from Perin, pp. 132-138 and Charland, pp. 78-81. To my knowledge, the Report has never been published and would constitute an important contribution to the subject) Merry del Val's view was a practical one of identifying what was « desirable, but also practicable, prudent and possible ». He did not believe in the possibility of remedial legislation, as the problems associated with it were endless, first political but with potential disastrous results for the Roman Catholic Church as well. He dismissed arguments that inaction on Manitoba would encourage aggression elsewhere in Canada; he thought the contrary more likely. He entertained little hope in immediate improvements but counted more on the good faith of Laurier and

on the longer term to better the situation. Quiet, administrative improvements were also possible. He thought there was good will at the federal level and in the provincial level of Manitoba. Yet, he had had negotiations with the government of Manitoba, promises had been made, and very little had come out of it (two Catholics received appointments: one as a school inspector, the other to the Advisory Board). As for the causes of the religious ills of Canada, he blamed extreme party solidarity (« l'esprit de parti »), the interference of the bishops and the clergy into politics, the lack of culture and education of the clergy, racial antagonism, the tendency to assimilation among some French Canadians and the resistance of the others to it. Mgr. Bégin's reaction to the Report was that it was « the faithful reproduction of all the insane views of the Liberal Party » the result of one « who spoke, acted and judged in a naive and stupid manner ». Perin concluded his analysis of the Delegate's Report: « Bégin correctly pointed out how uneven was the delegate's comparison of the two parties; he saw only perfidy in the Conservatives' championing remedial action, and only sincerity in the Liberals' obstructionism ». (p. 154)

1897, August 5 Merry del Val arrived in Rome.

1897, August 12 Laurier had an audience with the Pope. Rumours in Canada was that the interview had lasted an hour and half. According to Father Gonthier, it did not last more than 15-20 minutes. Laurier was successful in delaying the encyclical that was expected for September-October; he hoped to be able to extract more concessions from the Greenway government and thus gain papal support for the Laurier-Greenway compromise. The improvements suggested were not acceptable to Mgr. Langevin or to the Manitoba government.

1897, late summer-fall A new spate of Canadians embarked for Rome in an attempt to influence the course of events to come, especially the Roman decision on the school question. Are known to have gone to Rome: Mgr. Bruchési, the new archbishop of Montreal, Mgr. Émard, Alphonse Desjardins and Philippe Landry.

1897, August 24 *La Patrie* published the letter written by Mgr. Bégin, and signed by the other three francophone archbishops, that was sent to cardinal Ledochowski in Rome to protest the two liberal petitions submitted to the Vatican (October and December 1896).

1897, September 9 Father Gonthier obtained a copy of the report of Mgr. Merry del Val (« sub secreto Sancti Officii ») from Mgr. Celli, under-secretary for the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical

Affairs. In theory, the report was communicated so that Gonthier would present a summary of the multitude of documents that the authorities in Canada had flooded Rome with. In reality, it afforded Gonthier an opportunity to refute the Delegate's report.

1897, November 8 Mgr. Bruchési had an audience with the pope. At this audience with the pope, they discussed the creation of a Ministry of Education in Quebec. See the collection of documents on this issue elsewhere at the site.

1897, December 8 Pope Leo XIII issued the Encyclical *Affari Vos* on the Manitoba school question. See the documentary section.

1898, January 6 Mgr. Bégin, administrator of the diocese of Quebec published the Papal encyclical. A Pastoral Letter, under his name, also accompanied the papal encyclical; in it, the main points of the encyclical were emphasized and interpreted. This document was to be read, along with the encyclical, in the churches of the Archdiocese of Quebec. While published under the name of Mgr. Bégin, the text had actually been written by Mgr. Bruchési. Liberals would have denounced in Rome the Pastoral Letter as misinterpreting the ideas of the pope. See the documentary section for Mgr. Bégin's Pastoral Letter.

1898, January Thomas Charland reports (p. 101) that Jules-Paul Tardivel, the dominant ultramontane of his time, interpreted the papal encyclical « as a formal condemnation of the actions of the ultramontanes ». He was persuaded not to state it as such in his newspaper *La Vérité* so as not to provide ammunition to the liberals. Mgr. Langevin found out later that the Pope did not approve of the Pastoral Letter of Mgr. Bégin. Charland asserts (p. 125) that the papal encyclical did not demand that a remedial law be issued because it was clear that none would be forthcoming and that, consequently, it would only aggravate the situation in Canada. The Laurier-Greenway compromise was not categorically condemned so as not to indispose the Manitoba government and, thus, close the door to any future improvement of the situation.

1898, January 29 Wilfrid Laurier met with Mgr. Langevin and Mgr. Bruchési in Montreal to discuss the Laurier-Greenway compromise. Langevin requested that a remedial bill be issued. Laurier answered: « I understand that there will ultimately be a need for legislation, but it is not possible to do so at the present time ».

1898, February 2 Second meeting between Laurier and Langevin. Clifford Sifton was present. There was a third meeting (undated) between

Laurier, Langevin and Bryce who was a member of the Board of Education of Winnipeg. Laurier and Bryce offered that the textbooks to be used in the 83 catholic schools be those used in the public schools. These Readers would be purged of anything that could offend Catholics. Langevin rejected the offer as « neutral books » were unacceptable to him.

1898, February 15 The Quebec *Mercury*, controlled by Charles Fitzpatrick, announced that Mgr. Labrecque, bishop of Chicoutimi, had been reprimanded by the Rome for condemning and outlawing liberal newspapers. According to the *Mercury*, Larocque had refused to submit and was about to resign. The *Mercury* had to retract the next day. Larocque had indeed been censured by the Roman authorities. Mgr. Cameron, bishop of Antigonish also received a reprimand from Rome. These decisions would have been taken at a meeting of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs on October 14, 1897.

1898, March Father Dominique-Ceslas Gonthier's mission in Rome ended. He returned to Canada.

1898, end of March An unofficial arrangement was arrived at between the government of Manitoba and Mgr Langevin. This arrangement was to apply to districts where Roman Catholics were the overwhelming majority, in the rural, mostly francophone, areas of Manitoba. In return for accepting government inspectors for the public schools in Catholic districts and government certification for the teachers, the schools could keep their Catholic readers, especially in history and geography, have courses to train Catholic teachers and receive government grants for the support of the schools. There was no agreement for the mixed districts, those found in the cities, mostly in anglophone areas (Winnipeg and Brandon).

1898, July-August Mgr. Langevin found out that the informal agreement reached in March was challenged by the government of Manitoba. Langevin discovered that if complaints were raised against the textbooks used in the public « Catholic » schools, the government would have to apply the law, i.e. use only textbooks approved by the Board of Education. Thus, at this point, nothing had been done for the Catholic schools in the mixed districts, while any arrangement for the Catholic districts was entirely at the mercy of the provincial government. According to Robert Choquette (p. 332) this situation could not possibly satisfy Mgr. Langevin.

1899, August 3 Rome appointed a permanent delegate to Canada. Mgr. Diomede Falconio became the first Apostolic Delegate to Canada.

This was generally interpreted as a victory for the Liberals and a blow to the influence and interference of the Quebec clergy.

- 1899, December The Greenway government was defeated by the Conservative Party of Hugh John Macdonald (he was the son of John A. Macdonald). This did not bring particular improvement to the school situation in Manitoba.
- 1900 An amendment to the Election Act of Manitoba provided that people required to take the oath for voting would have to read the Manitoba Act in English, French, German, Icelandic, or any other Scandinavian language.
- 1901, September The oath that teachers must take was modified to make it acceptable to Roman Catholics.
- 1903, January There existed 105 public schools in Manitoba controlled by Roman Catholic commissioners; there were five « free » Catholic schools in Winnipeg and one in Brandon.
- 1904 The federal government freed, with Mgr. Langevin's approval, the sum of \$400,000 it was holding back from Manitoba so that the province would construct a bilingual teachers' college.
- 1905 Creation of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Laurier who had promised to restore the rights of Roman Catholics in these provinces (see the entry for December 1892) was persuaded by Clifford Sifton not to do so.
- 1906, December Laurier refused to make the settlement of the school question a condition to his acceptance of the extension of the frontiers of Manitoba into Keewatin.
- 1912, March The annexation of the northern region of Keewatin into Manitoba brought controversy when Roman Catholics living in this area lost rights as their territory was incorporated into the province of Manitoba. The rights they enjoyed under the Laurier-Greenway compromise were not as great as those they had enjoyed previously under the North-West territories' Act. See the text by Groulx on the schools of Keewatin.
- 1916 The Manitoba government unilaterally abolished the provision of the Laurier-Greenway compromise that guaranteed French education in Manitoba.

For details on the sources quoted throughout the chronology, as well as for further readings, please consult the set of documents on the Manitoba School Question posted at the site, especially the *Notes on Sources for the Study of Quebec, the Roman Catholic Church and the Manitoba School Question*.

© 2000 Claude Bélanger, Marianopolis College