

THE TORONTO IRISH CATHOLIC PRESS AND FENIANISM
1863-1866

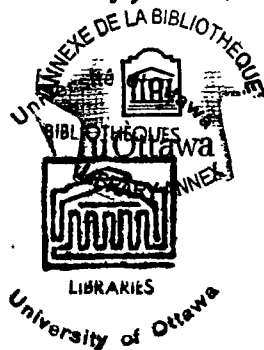
by

ROBERT F. McGEE.

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Curriculum Studiorum.

Name: Robert F. McGee.

Born: Huntingdon, Que. 1942.

Education: B.Ed. St. Joseph Teachers College,
Montreal,
University of Montreal, 1963.

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INTRODUCTION

The Fenian Brotherhood was an Irish Revolutionary Society established in Ireland in 1858 under the leadership of James Stephens and John O'Mahoney. The Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood had as its aim the liberation of Ireland by violent overthrow of the British rule if necessary. As the Fenian Brotherhood of America, the same organization was established in the United States in 1858 with John O'Mahoney as the Head Center.¹

The Brotherhood lay dormant for a number of years but received a great impetus from the American Civil War of 1861-65. Many of the officers and men, particularly of the Northern Armies, were Irish in origin. As a result of the war the Brotherhood had hundreds of trained and equipped Irish - American patriots willing to continue fighting, this time for Irish independence. The Brotherhood also benefited from the strong anti-British feeling prevalent among Americans in the post-war period. Encouraged then by moral support and sympathy from American politicians and reinforced by military personnel and weapons the

1. The Fenian Brotherhood was organized in local and district bodies known as circles. At the head of each circle was a center. O'Mahoney's title, then, as leader of the American counterpart of the Brotherhood, was Head Center.

Brotherhood adopted a strongly belligerent attitude in the late sixties. By 1865 the Fenians had become a conspicuous group particularly in the United States. Large meetings were held in major American cities during which anti-British sentiments were loudly expressed.

In the fall of 1865 a planned insurrection in Ireland was defeated before it really began and major Fenian leaders were arrested or forced into exile. Shortly thereafter the American Fenian Brotherhood established the Irish Republic in exile and elected O'Mahoney President. A split later developed in the American organization between O'Mahoney and the Senate wing, led by William Roberts, over the question of funds. The two factions also quarreled over the immediate aim of the Fenian Brotherhood with Roberts favoring an attack on British North America in lieu of an invasion of Ireland. In June of 1866 the Roberts Fenians captured Fort Erie in an armed invasion of Canada.

Throughout this period of the early sixties, however, the Fenian Brotherhood was more than a mere military threat to Canada. In its very nature and philosophy it was a challenge to the Irish Catholic community.²

2. Hereafter references to the Irish Press and community in Toronto unless otherwise specified may be assumed to refer to the Irish Catholics.

It offered a nationalist solution to Ireland's ills which was almost irreconcilable with Catholic beliefs. Consequently it forced the Irish Catholics of British North America to choose between their nationalist sentiment and sympathy for a movement intent on liberating Ireland and their belief in Catholic teaching which denounced the Brotherhood. As a result, Fenianism, as an Irish Nationalist movement, threatened to divide the Canadian Irish Catholic community over religious and nationalist issues and it brought into conflict the Canadian Irish Catholics' sympathy with Ireland's wrongs and their loyalty as colonials to Great Britain, their support for national liberation of Ireland and their respect for the teachings of the Catholic Church.

As a revolutionary organization with a republican and military philosophy the Fenian Brotherhood spearheaded the attack on Great Britain and drew the sympathy of many Irishmen disenchanted with British rule in Ireland. The two previous decades (1840-60) had not been prosperous for Ireland and many Irish immigrants and exiles could well sympathize with and support any movement intent on liberating Ireland. At the same time, however, the basic philosophy of Fenianism alienated a large percentage of its potential supporters. Its advocacy of force in the struggle to free Ireland, as opposed to the more traditional methods of moral persuasion and constitutional reform, and its confessed republican views, with their allied overtones of

anti-clericalism, gained for the Brotherhood the enmity of the Catholic Church in an age when a large percentage of those opposed to British rule in Ireland were Catholic in religion. In the eyes of the Church the Fenians were anti-monarchical, anti-clerical revolutionaries in the tradition of such condemned liberators as Mazzini and Garibaldi. The Church could not oppose republicanism and revolution in the Italian peninsula and condone it in Ireland. Though she walked the tightrope of diplomacy for several years on this issue her position was necessarily one of opposition to Fenianism.³

It was this question of the basic philosophy of Fenianism which taxed the minds and hearts of the Irish of the world in the 1860's. This seemingly irreconcilable division between Church and Nation perplexed not only the Irish in Ireland but the Irish everywhere, particularly in the major areas of Irish immigration, among them the British North American colonies. The question, indeed, was all the more distressing in British North America since the Irish there were content to live under British rule and protection. Thus the Irish heart in British North America was torn between sympathy for Fenian aims and Church condemnation of the Brotherhood's methods, opposition to British rule in Ireland and loyalty to British North America.

3. Official Papal condemnation of Fenianism did not come until January 12, 1870 at a time when the Brotherhood had lost most of its power and influence.

These were the questions which confronted the Irish Catholic papers of Toronto during this decade. Both positions were well represented. The Irish Canadian was a strongly nationalist,⁴ pro-Fenian paper while the Canadian Freeman had a very pronounced Catholic character. The threat of a Fenian Raid from the United States in late 1865 and early 1866 was not the only aspect of Fenianism which made it a pressing issue in British North America, particularly in Toronto. It was the larger question of Fenianism in general, its nature and character, and in particular its relation to the Irish Catholics and the Catholic Church which concerned the Toronto Irish Catholic Press. The reaction of the Irish in Toronto and all British North America to the Brotherhood, their support or opposition to the Fenian philosophy and more particularly their active participation in the movement or incessant struggle against it: these were the issues of the time for the Irish Catholic Press. As the current topic of the day, Fenianism created a state of tension and apprehension, particularly near the frontier, which lasted for a large part of the decade.

British North America in the mid century had a considerable Irish population, a significant part of which was

4. Nationalist as used throughout the thesis means Irish Nationalist. It refers to a patriot, one who believed that each nation had the right to determine its own policies unhindered by others and can be considered to refer to those who favored Irish independence.

located in Toronto, Canada West. The 1850-51 census revealed that those of Irish origin in Canada numbered 227,766. Of these 176,267 lived in Canada West and 51,499 in Canada East.⁵ They constituted twelve percent (12%) of the total population of 1,842,265. The majority lived in Canada West where they were eighteen percent (18%) of the population as compared to five point seven percent (5.7%) of the Canada East population. By the 1860-61 census the total population increase had been thirty-six percent (36%) with the Irish now constituting nine point six percent (9.6%) of the population. In Canada West the Irish numbered 191,231 constituting thirteen point seven percent (13.7%) of the population. In 1850-51 of this Irish community eighty-six percent (86%) lived in rural areas leaving fourteen percent (14%) in the cities. Half of these were in Toronto giving that city an Irish population of eleven thousand (11,000) or thirty-five percent (35%) of the city populace, the second largest Irish community in the whole province. Only Kingston had a higher percentage of Irish for its population. In Toronto the Irish were the largest national group in the city and outnumbered even the Canadians; French and English combined.

The 1861 census revealed that there was a shift in settlement from the previous decade. The percentage of Irish in the cities had increased to sixteen percent (16%)

5. These figures and their interpretation are taken from Lyne, Daniel Colman, The Irish in the Province of Canada in the Decade Leading to Confederation, 1857-67, Unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1960, pp. 55-69.

leaving eighty-four percent (84%) in rural areas. The proportion of Irish to the whole city population declined during the fifties. Toronto received the largest increase in the new Irish residents. Within the city itself the areas of Irish settlement had shifted from the previous decade. There were no apparent Irish areas in Canada West cities as there were in Montreal or Quebec and no ghettos as in some American cities. This seemed to indicate that the Irish were readily received into the Toronto community and did not find it necessary to form the "Irish sections" more common to the American cities of the period.⁶ In 1861 the Irish in Toronto numbered 12,441 and were twenty-seven percent (27%) of the population. This was a ten percent (10%) increase in Irish settlers but an eight percent (8%) decrease in the ratio of Irish to the rest of the Toronto populace.

It is difficult to determine how many of these Irish settlers were Catholic. No figures to this effect are provided by the census returns. The 1861 census reveals that the total Catholic population of Canada West was 258,141 out of a total population of 1,396,091.⁷ Assuming that the French Canadian population of Canada West was Roman Catholic, the number of non-French-Canadian Roman Catholics was 224,854. This was still some 33,000 Roman Catholics larger than the

6. Ibid., p. 65.

7. Census of Canada, 1861.

total Irish population. Assuming that the Irish Catholic immigrants would constitute the largest number of Roman Catholics, minus the French Canadians, we may conclude that a large percentage of the 191,231 Irish were Roman Catholic. In Toronto there were 12,135 Roman Catholics and some 12,441 Irish in 1861 out of a total city population of 44,821. The French Canadian population in Toronto at the same time was 435. Consequently the Roman Catholics probably constituted a large number of those Toronto citizens of Irish origin. There were 85 Catholic Churches in Canada West as compared to 215 Wesleyan Methodists and 125 Churches of England. In Toronto there were 3 Catholic Churches for the 12,135 Catholics and 5 churches for the 14,125 members of the Church of England.

From this it is apparent that the Irish, whether Catholic or Protestant, constituted a significant element in the Toronto community in the fifties and sixties. Any topic which might disrupt this element would naturally have repercussions throughout the community, especially an issue with nationalist and religious overtones.

The Irish Catholic community was well represented in the Press. The city had three Irish Catholic papers, the Irish Canadian, the Canadian Freeman and the Mirror. The major weeklies of concern to this thesis were the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman which offered two different philosophies and viewpoints on Fenianism in the sixties.

The Mirror, A Toronto Liberal, Irish paper, probably held a view similar to that of the Canadian Freeman on the Fenian issue. Unfortunately copies of pertinent issues of this paper are unobtainable.

The Irish Canadian was quite openly nationalist and much less religious than its contemporary, the Canadian Freeman. Published by Boyle and Hynes of Toronto it came into existence on January 7th, 1863, when Fenianism was becoming an issue in both Ireland and the United States. The paper never revealed the identity of its editor but the Canadian Freeman maintained that he was one Jeremiah Murphy. In the opening editorial the paper dedicated itself to an independent view in politics and to devotion to the service of the Irish in Canada.⁸ On that occasion the editor admitted having no "nostrum" for the amelioration of the wrongs and sufferings of the Irish.

In the first year of publication the paper adopted a very nationalist line with regard to Ireland and frequently carried editorials describing the sufferings and grievances that the Irish were forced to endure under the British rule. It took hope, however, in the growing significance of the Fenian Brotherhood and supported its aim of liberating Ireland and establishing self-rule for the country. By

8. "The Work Before Us", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. I, No. 1, Wednesday, January 7, 1863, p. 4, col. 2.

early 1864 the paper's support for the Brotherhood had gained it the criticism of the Globe and the Canadian Freeman. The editor's sympathy with Fenian aims and means led it to criticize those Irish and American clergymen who opposed Fenianism. By the end of 1865 the editor believed that only Fenianism could cure Ireland's ills.

The Canadian Freeman was owned and edited by George Moylan, a Conservative and friend of both John A. Macdonald and Thomas D'Arcy McGee. The paper was very religious in tone and a staunch supporter of the Catholic Church and her prelates. While it was interested in events in Ireland and opposed to Orangeism, it attempted as much as possible to avoid issues which might stir up in British North America the religious and political strife characteristic of the Old World. Its editorial policy was Catholic as compared to nationalist and it contained numerous articles and editorials which reflected a Catholic attitude and outlook.

PART I
FENIANISM
CHAPTER I
PRINCIPLES OF FENIANISM

Although the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman both agreed on the need for economic and social reform in Ireland they disagreed on the solution. Fundamentally the Irish Canadian felt that independence was the only answer and therefore it supported the Irish nationalist movement - Fenianism. The Canadian Freeman, on the other hand, accepted Home Rule and would in any case have been doubtful about the ends of the Fenians. But what turned it into an enemy of Fenianism was the latter's readiness to use violence if necessary. The Irish Canadian, disillusioned with the failure of moral persuasion, favored a stronger expression of Irish discontent and supported physical force if necessary, whereas the Canadian Freeman maintained a firm belief in constitutional reform and Parliamentary agitation as the means of improving Ireland's position.¹ Thus the issue of Fenianism as such was an issue between the two papers. In addition, however, there were two others. The

1. In advocating this method the editor was asserting his support for Daniel O'Connell's methods which sought to force the British Parliament to repeal the Union of 1801 which had abolished the separate Irish Parliament and united it to the British Parliament at Westminster.

Irish Canadian claimed that the issue was a political one and that the Church should remain neutral. It also argued that the Fenian Brotherhood was not a secret society and therefore not liable to Church opposition.

The vast increase in immigration from Ireland in the years following the potato famines of 1845-47 resulted in a corresponding interest in the affairs of the homeland among the Irish citizens of British North America. In the decades following the famines there were a number of attempts made to improve the economic and social structure of Irish society all of which were of interest to the Irish in British North America. The Irish Canadian was established in 1863 as a result of this growing Irish nationalist movement among the Irish in Canada. The Canadian Freeman, although an older paper was equally concerned with the changing conditions in Ireland. Both agreed that Ireland's economic and social conditions were deplorable and warranted a general reappraisal. They did not agree, however, on the solutions offered to improve these conditions in Ireland. To the growth of radical movements advocating extreme measures for securing Ireland's betterment, the two papers adopted opposing positions.

From its inception in 1863 the Irish Canadian had exhibited strong nationalist sentiments and had concentrated heavily on events in Ireland. In its early months, however, the Irish Canadian had avoided expressing support for any

extreme measures and particularly disregarded the passionate topic of Fenianism, at least until the paper had become part of the Toronto scene. Encouraged, however, by the signs of growing radicalism in Ireland in the fall of 1863 and the increasing popularity of the Fenian Brotherhood in America, the editor revealed an ardent sympathy with the radical element among the Irish reformers. By the fall of its first year of publication it was encouraging the support now growing in Ireland and the United States for a stronger remedy for Ireland's ills than mere moral force.² Disillusioned with the failure of parliamentary reform and the value of moral persuasion the editor began advocating physical force as the true remedy for Ireland's sufferings.³

In accord with the mounting sympathy for radical social and political change in Ireland, the Irish Canadian recognized in Fenianism the means of attaining these objectives. As a result the Irish Canadian supported the Brotherhood's aim of Irish independence and even sanctioned its use of physical force, if necessary. Although the position taken by the editor on the future state of Ireland and the suggested remedies for her ills was criticized by the Globe the remarks in general created little stir. Many

2. "Slievenamon", (ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. I, No. 35, September 9, 1863, p. 2, col. 1-2.

3. "Unite", (ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. I, No. 36, September 16, 1863, p. 2, col. 1-2.

Irish Canadians could well sympathize with Ireland's sufferings and condemn parliamentary agitation as ineffective. Besides the paper expressed ignorance of the Fenian Brotherhood's real character and appeared to be merely impressed with the Society's aims. The editor tended to use the argument for force only as a threat or warning to the British to convince them to grant Ireland a return of Home Rule.⁴ In the eyes of many Irishmen this was a much more acceptable goal than independence. He was careful to emphasize his repudiation of violence as an end in itself.

As Fenianism developed into an increasingly more significant issue in the United States, the editor of the Irish Canadian became more and more outspoken on the issue. From an expression of interest and sympathy the editor proceeded to complete endorsement of the Brotherhood's views on Ireland's future.⁵ He remarked that if a wish of God-speed in their mission and a prayer for speedy success made one a Fenian, then he pleaded guilty to the charge.

To justify his recourse to, what seemed to many, extreme measures, the editor of the Irish Canadian emphasized the complete failure of all the attempts at improvements in Ireland during the previous year. Pointing

4. "Our Claims", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 19, May 18, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-2.

5. "Special Organisms", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 46, November 23, 1864, p. 4, col. 3-4.

to Poland and the struggle there of the nationalists against oppression, he argued that the Irish could equally well claim the right to overthrow tyranny and establish their own government.⁶

In so arguing the editor was requesting no more for Ireland than the Responsible Government and Self-Rule which the Irish Canadians enjoyed in British North America. Yet for expressing such views and urging the assertion of Ireland's natural rights, he was labelled a traitor by the Protestant Press of Toronto.

The Canadian Freeman disregarded Fenianism until it developed into a pressing concern not only in British North America but in Toronto in particular. The editor refused to discuss the topic because he believed that there was nothing but strife to be gained by stirring up Old World passions in the new colonies. While the paper carried a number of exchanges from the Irish Press, it selected articles which had a broad general appeal or a religious theme rather than radical nationalistic diatribes against the British and consequently the editor had made no comment on the Fenian Brotherhood's growth in Ireland or the United States.

6. "Another Threshold", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 51, December 28, 1864, p. 4. col. 1-3.

In accord with these guidelines the editor of the Canadian Freeman succeeded fairly well in disregarding Fenianism until the spring of 1864 and even then he referred to the movement reluctantly and only because the Irish Canadian publicized the Fenian Movement. He avoided any reference to the Brotherhood as long as it was peculiar to Great Britain and the United States, but once he feared that it had intruded into Canada he felt compelled to warn his fellow countrymen in British North America about the movement.⁷ This unusual emphasis which the editor accorded the Fenian Movement was occasioned by the St. Patrick's Day celebrations of March 17th, 1864 and the subsequent reaction to the events of that day by members of the Canadian Press and the Irish Canadian politician, Thomas D'Arcy McGee. Neither intended to allow certain actions and statements to pass without comment no matter how hard the Canadian Freeman attempted to look the other way. In its account of the St. Patrick's Day proceedings the Canadian Freeman had reported only the addresses advocating moral force as a means of redressing Ireland's wrongs and had disregarded the more radical speeches of the day.⁸

7. "Fenianism in Canada", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VI, No. 40, April 7, 1864, p. 2, col. 7-8, p. 3, col. 1.

8. "The Case of Ireland Stated", (ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VI, No. 38, March 24, 1864, p. 2, col. 3.

Although some of the speakers referred directly or indirectly to Fenianism and expressed sympathy with its cause the editor made little mention of their statements. Other Canadian journals, however, did not so readily disregard the question of Fenianism, and it became a recurring issue in the following weeks.⁹

Forced to comment on the issue, the Canadian Freeman examined the economic and social conditions in Ireland and the Fenians' proposed solution.¹⁰ The editor recalled the desperate plight of Ireland and the circumstances in the homeland which had forced hundreds of thousands of Irish men and women to flee the country. He emphasized the deplorable conditions of poverty, the exploited resources, and deserted villages which even the English Press admitted required remedies. He readily admitted the need for reform and believed that moderate unobjectionable demands, such as a return of the Irish Native Parliament, would satisfy even the most ardent nationalists, but he also emphasized that the main area of contention was still the method by which Ireland's condition could be improved. The editor remarked that he had no intention of offering a solution nor recommending a course of action. His main concern was

9. "The Fenians", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VI, No. 39, March 31, 1864, p. 2, col. 5.

10. "Fenianism in Canada", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, op. cit.

the method proposed by the extreme nationalists-the Fenians-who advocated physical force as the only course offering any chance of success. He emphasized that he did not intend to discuss the prudence or foolishness of their suggested solution to Ireland's troubled state nor examine the righteousness of their motives. His only concern was to decide whether or not Fenianism, as a solution to Ireland's difficulties, deserved the support and approval of the Irish at home and in Canada.

In his opinion the Fenian Brotherhood could not be recommended because its approach to the issues did not appeal to the vast majority of the Irish. The three influential groups in Ireland, the Clergy, the Press and the People, were all united in opposition to the Brotherhood. The editor based his condemnation of the society on the traditional respect and obedience of the Irish for the opinions of the clergy. The majority of the Hierarchy, both in Ireland and the United States, after careful deliberation and with the highest and holiest of motives, had condemned Fenianism. They, along with the majority of the Irish, realized that the movement would only result in anarchy in Ireland. Recalling the loyalty of the Irish to clerical admonitions, the editor concluded that without this sanction of the clergy the movement would end in ruin. The Fenian method of alleviating Ireland's distress would never be popular among loyal Catholics as long as it merited the disapproval of the clergy.

Clerical opposition was prompted by the Fenian Brotherhood's support for violence and revolution as the only recourse open in the struggle for Irish independence. The Bishops' rested their arguments on the Church's traditional opposition to violent overthrow of established governments. As Moylan pointed out, the Hierarchy was not critical of Fenianism because it was a political society but because it advocated conspiracy against lawful authority. While the Bishops made no objection to O'Connell's methods of moral persuasion and parliamentary agitation in the struggle for constitutional reform, they did oppose recourse to physical force on moral grounds. In the opinion of the Irish Bishops Ireland needed social reform not civil war.

Moylan recalled the fidelity of the Irish to the Holy See and their adherence to the Catholic faith.¹¹ The Irish Catholics, despite the Reformation and the Protestant domination, had maintained, in the face of severe opposition, their allegiance to ecclesiastical authority. Nowhere more than among the Irish was the maxim "Rome has spoken, the cause is at an end" revered and obeyed. In comparison to years of strong faith, the present seemed to be "evil days" in which so-called Catholics openly criticized the Pope's pronouncements and disregarded his teachings on secret societies and revolution.

11. "The Fruits of Fenianism", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VI, No. 51, June 23, 1864, p. 2, col. 4-5.

In obvious reference to the Fenians, he characterized those who displayed such anti-clerical sentiments as followers of Garibaldi and Mazzini. He prayed that the Church would be delivered from men who exhibited such disregard for Papal authority.

The editor stressed that many of the American Bishops had also denounced the Brotherhood and he left it to his readers to decide for themselves whether or not Fenianism should be encouraged in Canada. In his opinion, however, there were even more reasons than clerical opposition for discounting the society in Canada.¹² This view he based on the belief that the Irish in British North America enjoyed a rational, liberal society where their rights were respected; hence they owed loyalty to the country and government, and support for Fenianism would only disrupt the relationship existing among the different national and religious groups in Canada and brand the Irish Catholics as disloyal.

In denouncing Fenianism for its extremism the editor maintained that Ireland's troubles could be resolved by constitutional and parliamentary means without recourse to violence.¹³ Moylan denied that parliamentary agitation

12. "Fenianism in Canada", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, op. cit.

13. "Fenianism", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 6, August 10, 1865, p. 2, col. 2-3.

offered no hope of success and pointed to the formation of the National Association¹⁴ as an example of this course of action. Unlike Fenianism the recently established Association had clerical support and encouragement. Constitutional reform was an accepted means of redress to a Church which had always remained staunch in its respect for established authority and existing governments. The Church traditionally opposed and discouraged revolutions, secret societies, and attempts to overthrow governments unless the grievances were unbearable. Only then would she accept physical force and even then only if the revolt had a "moral certainty of success".

The editor maintained that no class of Irishmen in Ireland, either lay or clerical, expected any good to come from Fenianism unless they were "turbulent anarchists or demented enthusiasts". He believed that few could expect anything from men whose first act was to rebel against ecclesiastical authority. He called on all Catholics to take a stand against Fenianism if they did not want to see a system worse than the Carbonari¹⁵ flourish in their country. Where Fenianism existed there was strife and dissatisfaction; where it did not exist there was peace.

14. The National Association was an Irish organization which sought to improve Ireland's condition by means of parliamentary reform and agitation.

15. The Carbonari were members of certain secret revolutionary societies of the 19th century in Italy. Condemned by Pope Pius VII, they were denounced for their secret and revolutionary character.

Because the editor of the Canadian Freeman had based his opposition to the Brotherhood on the Church's teachings and position, the Irish Canadian, in reply to this attack, attempted to defend its own view of the movement by discrediting the moral grounds of Moylan's argument. The editor of the Irish Canadian justified his growing sympathy with Fenian aims and methods by attempting to prove that Fenianism was not in contradiction to Catholic teaching. He sought to reconcile his belief in the need for forceful liberation of Ireland with the Pope's ban on revolutionary societies. He was fully aware that in order to convince the vast majority of his Irish Catholic readers of the righteousness of the Fenian cause he would have to eliminate or diminish their doubt and uncertainty on the moral validity of the Fenians' proposed action.

He rested his argument on the principle that the Church had no justifiable right to interfere in a purely political and temporal matter and maintained that there should be a clear distinction between religious and political issues. Furthermore the Bishops' objection to recourse to physical force was not in keeping with the Church's acceptance of revolution when political injustice warranted it. The editor maintained that the tyranny in Ireland gave ample justification for a resort to extreme measures. He criticized the Church in Ireland for supporting the established British Regime when it should have been assisting the Irish Reformers.

To convince his Catholic readers that the Church ought not involve itself in what was a purely political matter, the editor of the Irish Canadian published several letters written by Catholic priests to papers in Ireland all of which argued against Church interference in political societies such as the Fenian Brotherhood. In one letter an Irish Parish priest maintained that the priests and the Fenians should not be opposed to one another.¹⁶ He pointed out that if the Fenians committed an offence or broke the law then it was up to the Magistrates to look into the affair and not the priests. He advised against the priests attempting to denounce the organization.

Another Irish priest pointed out that any denunciation by the clergy of Fenianism merely made the Fenians and the clergy enemies and created a bad situation.¹⁷ Since the movement appealed to young Irishmen there was very little a priest could say to change their views. The only result which could come from such a stand was an unsatisfactory one. He suggested that in time the people would begin to dislike and distrust the clergy for opposing the aims and means of Fenianism.

16. "The Fenians and the Priests", letter from a parish priest to the Cork Examiner, The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 6, February 15, 1865, p. 3. col. 3-4.

17. "The Fenians", letter to the Universal News, from a Thomond Priest, The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 10, March 15, 1865, p. 3. col. 1-2.

To denounce clerical interference in the struggle for Irish independence the Irish Canadian included a letter from one author who argued that the decision as to whether or not a person should support the Fenians was a personal one in which the clergy ought not to interfere.¹⁸ He further argued that Ireland had every justifiable right to seek independence.

The editor of the Irish Canadian received a letter from "An Irish Priest" who went so far as to accuse the Pope and the Irish clergy of being in league with the English.¹⁹ He pointed to the Canadian Freeman and the Montreal True Witness and Catholic Chronicle as current examples of this same condoning and traitorous attitude on the part of some Irish Catholics. He emphasized that according to the Church it was lawful to rebel when tyranny became as intolerable as it was in Ireland. Though a member of the clergy himself, he accused the Catholic Bishops of treachery in informing their congregations that they had to submit to British rule. As Bishops and Priests they merited respect but as politicians they deserved the curse of the compassionate.

18. "Dangerous Brotherhoods", letter to Connaught Patriot from "The Hermit", The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 24, June 21, 1865, p. 3, col. 1-4.

19. "Correspondence, Letter from an Irish Priest", Letter to the editor of the Irish Canadian from "An Irish Priest", The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 47, December 13, 1865, p. 5, col. 1-2.

To separate Fenianism and the political question of Ireland's future from the realm of religion the Irish Canadian defended the Catholic's rights as citizens to organize non-religious societies and thereby exercise their prerogative to form their own opinions guided by their own consciences.²⁰ Catholics, the editor emphasized, surely had the same rights and privileges as other citizens to exercise political power and meet without Church supervision. If Catholics did not have the liberty to enjoy such natural rights without clerical interference then they might as well throw off the coverings of quasi-manhood.

Meanwhile the Canadian Freeman was supporting the Church's side in the argument against the Brotherhood. The pro-Fenian New York Daily News and the New York Herald had criticized the Most Reverend Archbishop Purcell and the Right Reverend Wood of Philadelphia for their condemnation of the Fenian Brotherhood.²¹ The Daily News referred to the Archbishop as an "insincere, illogical, cruel, and false hearted Irishman". The Canadian Freeman pointed out that such a foul attack on the venerable Archbishop was typical of the spirit and tendency of Fenianism and lamented that such views were common among the members of the Brotherhood. Though they did not all express themselves

20. "A Sapiant Looker-On", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 33, August 30, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-2.

21. "A Fenian Defender", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 39, March 30, 1865, p. 2, col. 5-6.

so frankly, they all resisted Church authority and had contempt for ecclesiastical superiors and Episcopal warnings. The editor called the Fenians followers of the principles laid down by Garibaldi, Mazzini and the Carbonari. In his opinion they would disregard the altar and put down the priests that got in their way. He warned that the Fenians could not be supported by Irish and American clergymen, who sympathized with Ireland's cause because they had proven themselves unfit for encouragement and opposed to the greatest trust Ireland could give them - the faith which had continued for fourteen centuries.

He admitted that many of the Fenian supporters were honest Irish patriots who would willingly give their last dollar or shed their blood for the cause of the homeland but they were controlled by unprincipled and unpatriotic profiteers. He advised these deceived followers to examine carefully the articles, speeches and addresses attributed to Fenian leaders as evidence of the Brotherhood's true character. Their anti-Catholic and anti-clerical attitude should convince these deluded members of the real nature of Fenianism. He considered "the spawn of Head Center Mahoney as the severest chastisement which it has pleased an all wise Providence to inflict on the Irish race."

In reply to rumors that word had been received from Rome that the Fenians were not to be disturbed, the editor of the Canadian Freeman assured his readers that the rumor

was false and incorrect.²² He pointed out that before taking any decision on such matters the Holy See always considered the views of the Bishops in whose country the Association existed. The majority of the clergy and the hierarchy in Ireland, the United States and Canada had disapproved of the Fenian Brotherhood; therefore it would be inconceivable that the Church authorities in Rome would decide to allow it free rein.

The deep division which existed between the views of the two editors was clearly illustrated by the passionate disagreement which erupted over the burning in effigy of the Irish priest, Daniel Collins, by his parishioners for his denunciation of Fenianism from the altar. Although the pastor had won the prestige and respect of his flock numerous years earlier during the famine, they felt sufficiently angered by his action to resort to such an insult. The Irish Canadian assumed the side of the people and pointed out that Father Collins was "more than suspected of being a traitor to a great national cause".²³

In reply the Canadian Freeman accused the Irish Canadian of condoning the recent burning and of calling

22. "The Holy See and the Fenians", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 8, August 24, 1865, p. 2, col. 2.

23. "The Priest and the Altar", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 1, January 11, 1865, p. 4, col. 3-4.

Reverend Collins a traitor. The editor pointed out that the priest was merely doing his duty and he denounced Fenianism as a revival of the "impious" doctrines of the First French Revolution.²⁴

The two papers also disagreed on whether the Fenian Brotherhood was a secret society. The Pope had issued an official statement in 1846 denouncing and condemning any society that was secret and oath-bound. The Irish and American clergy as well as several Catholic editors had seized upon this Papal pronouncement as an argument against the Brotherhood. They maintained that since the Brotherhood employed secret signs and was oath-bound it fell under the Papal ban.

The Irish Canadian, however, had dealt with the whole issue of Fenianism and the Papal ruling on secret societies in 1863 shortly after it began publishing. In its first month of existence it published letters from Father Patrick Lavelle, an Irish priest, who, as an ardent nationalist, supported the cause of Irish freedom and favored strong measures to redress Ireland's wrongs. He maintained that Fenianism was not forbidden by the Church and that it did not fall under the Pope's ban on secret societies since it was not bound by a secret oath.²⁵ Before long he found himself in a continuous argument not only with less radical

24. "By Their Fruits Are They Known", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 29, January 19, 1865, p. 2, col. 5-6.

25. "Letter of Father Lavelle on 'Secret Societies'", The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 16, April 27, 1864, p. 2, col. 1-5.

Irish and Irish-American papers but with ecclesiastical authority, notably the most Reverend Dr. Cullen, Archbishop of Dublin. When he was severely censured he journeyed to Rome to defend himself against Archbishop Cullen's referral of the case to the Pope. Shortly after his return he was relieved of his clerical duties on account of his ardently nationalist tone.

The Irish Canadian supported Father Lavelle throughout the affair and opposed the views of Archbishop Cullen and the decision of Rome. It argued that Father Lavelle had been unjustly accused and that the Pope's decision was the result of false evidence.²⁶ It concluded that though Father Lavelle may have been wrong as a priest in defending condemned societies, he was right as an Irishman.

The Canadian Freeman immediately censured the Irish Canadian for criticizing the Hierarchy of Ireland and the Pope's decision. The editor denounced the paper for supporting Father Lavelle's views on secret societies and the use of force.²⁷ He cited the writings of the Irish priest as an example of the growing opposition to clerical views on Fenianism.²⁸ He criticized the Irish Canadian

26. "Aminadab Sleaf and Father Lavelle" (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 25, June 29, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-3.

27. "The Fenian Organ Again", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 1, July 7, 1864, p. 2, col. 7.

28. "The Fruits of Fenianism", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, op. cit.

for fostering anti-clerical ideas in its defence of Father Lavelle and for upholding the priest against the Pope. The editor called the Irish Canadian a Fenian sheet and its editor a full-fledged follower of Garibaldi and a member of the Carbonari.

In reply to a letter from Archbishop Connolly of Halifax discussing the position of the Irish Catholics in British North America and their loyalty to the colony, the Canadian Freeman and the Irish Canadian summed up their positions on the relation between the Church and the Fenian movement. The Bishop declared that the Irish in British North America were better off than the Irish in the United States and remarked that the Irish in British North America should be content and have no sympathy with annexationist ideas or the Fenian movement.²⁹

The Canadian Freeman complimented the Archbishop on his position and agreed that he had taken the proper stand on Fenianism.³⁰ He went on to say that a few such attacks from the Catholic Hierarchy of the continent and Fenianism would suffer an attack from which it would have difficulty recovering.

29. "Letter from the Archbishop of Halifax", The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 30, January 25, 1866, p. 2, col. 1-2.

30. "The Archbishop of Halifax on the Irish in America", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 30, January 25, 1866, p. 2, col. 3.

The Irish Canadian maintained that the clergy should not become involved in politics especially when their prejudices caused them to arrive at conclusions diametrically opposed to those of their congregations.³¹ He pointed out that the Irish Catholics gave more reverence, honor and obedience to their clergy than any other peoples but in return they should expect them to assist and not oppose them in the struggle for "National existence and material prosperity" against the enemy of "poverty and persecution".

The two Irish Canadian papers both sought amelioration of conditions in Ireland but ardently disagreed on the value of Fenianism as the solution to the homeland's ills. The Irish Canadian believed that any hope for constitutional reform had passed and that physical resistance was required while the Canadian Freeman, in calling for reform, denounced revolution and cautioned its readers against supporting violence as a means of helping Ireland. The Canadian Freeman appealed to the religious principles of its readers and warned that the Church had discouraged Catholics from supporting Fenianism. In reply to this the Irish Canadian denounced clerical interference in political affairs and demanded that Catholics be allowed to exercise their political rights free from clerical domination. The Irish

31. "Halifax Justice", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 5, February 21, 1866, p. 4, col. 4.

Canadian rejected the argument that the clandestine character of the Fenian Brotherhood brought it under the Papal ban on secret societies and quoted numerous clerics and laymen to prove that Fenianism did not merit clerical admonition.

PART I

CHAPTER II

FENIANISM IN IRELAND AND NORTH AMERICA

The Fenian Brotherhood had been originally established in Ireland to liberate that country from British rule but the movement appealed in spirit to hundreds of Irish exiles and immigrants scattered throughout the world. Thus, though Ireland was the focal point of the Brotherhood's existence and activities, it had many supporters outside the homeland and when in time circumstances forced the Irish Fenians into hiding the center of Fenianism moved from Ireland to the United States. The unexpected suppression and prosecution of Fenian leaders by the Irish authorities after an abortive attempt at insurrection in the winter of 1865-66 and the widespread sympathy for the anti-British Fenians among the American people and politicians encouraged this shift of the center of Fenian activity from the homeland itself to the Irish ghettos of the United States.

Although both the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman displayed a growing interest in events in Ireland and a mounting anxiety over the Nation's fate there was no unanimity in their reaction to reports of an unsuccessful Fenian uprising in the homeland in the fall of 1865. Interested in and encouraged by the growth of the Brotherhood in Ireland, the Irish Canadian regretted the premature

failure of the attempted insurrection of 1865 but nevertheless professed hope for future success. The Canadian Freeman, on the other hand, exhibited little interest in Fenian activities abroad, content to leave the issue in the hands of those closer to the scene. Nevertheless the editor greeted the arrest of the Fenian leaders in Ireland as a vindication of his prophecy that the movement would end in disaster. The ensuing shift of emphasis to the American Brotherhood after the failure of the Irish Fenians restored the Irish Canadian's optimism and the editor was heartened by the large number of American Fenians intent on fulfilling the original objective of a liberated Ireland. Although discouraged by the subsequent split in the American Brotherhood into the O'Mahoney and Roberts factions the Irish Canadian urged the Fenians to reunite and concentrate on their first objective - the freedom of Ireland. The Canadian Freeman regretted the growth of Fenianism in the United States and greeted the split between President O'Mahoney and the Senate under Roberts as an indication that the movement in the United States was nearing its demise also.

While supporting the American Fenians, the Irish Canadian urged them to adhere to their original aim of liberating Ireland and strongly denounced the plan of invading Canada. The Irish Canadian, as well as the Canadian Freeman, opposed and discounted the rumored invasion; the Irish Canadian because it would divert the

Fenians from their first aim - the liberation of Ireland, the Canadian Freeman because it would bring war to a peaceful people without cause.

Word reached Canada in the fall of 1865 of a planned Fenian insurrection in Ireland. There were reports of men marching and drilling about the countryside. It seemed evident that the time had come when the Fenians were prepared to force the issue of Ireland's freedom. Pro-Fenian papers and sympathizers took heart that the day of reckoning was approaching. The Irish Canadian received these reports of the Brotherhood in Ireland arming and drilling with pleasure and greeted it as good news.¹ The editor considered this an indication that soon there would be an attempt to regain Ireland's liberties. In his opinion these were signs that the day of deliverance was fast approaching and he advised everyone to be prepared to make a sacrifice for Ireland, if not by assisting, then at least by not condemning the effort. He emphasized that Ireland had suffered from tyranny too long and attempted to justify the Fenian recourse to force by stressing the failure of constitutional methods to redress her wrongs. He called this new method of securing Ireland's freedom the work of wise Providence. The English in forcing the Irish from their homeland had forced them to understand themselves; had

1. "The March of Fenianism," (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 34, September 13, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-2.

intensified their nationalism and had provided them with the opportunity to learn the art of war in the American Civil War. While he was afraid that the authorities had become aware of the movement, he hoped that it was too late to arrest it.

The editor of the Irish Canadian was especially gratified to see that the Brotherhood had gone from the planning stage to possible action and he greeted this as a sign that the Irish were now prepared to do something themselves in the struggle to remove the ills they had suffered from for so long.² He was concerned, however, over the premature disclosure of vital details of the Fenians' plans. Revelation of the Fenians' aims resulted in a good deal of sarcasm at the Brotherhood's expense in numerous papers. The Irish Canadian feared that such an exposure of Fenianism to ridicule would harm the organization.³ He also warned against failure, stating that the Fenians would be better not to attempt the liberation of Ireland at all than to fail in their effort; for should the attempt fail, Ireland would suffer greater wrongs than she did at present.

The planned Fenian insurrection of 1865 in Ireland however was short lived. The Government moved in; arrested

2. "At Last", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 18, May 10, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-3.

3. "Who Laughs Best Laughs Last", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 23, June 14, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-3.

various suspected Fenian leaders; and closed down the Irish People newspaper with the help of several informers. The Brotherhood had failed in its bid to threaten British ascendancy in Ireland and the false hopes of numerous Fenian sympathizers were again painfully destroyed. The arrests of the Fenian leaders and the capture of Head Center Stephens had defeated the Fenians' plans and drastically weakened their organization in Ireland. The Irish Canadian blamed this failure on the lack of secrecy; the deliberations of the Society were too open and thus too easily accessible to spies. With the leaders of the organization arrested, the editor regretted that the Fenian crisis in Ireland had come to a head and the peoples' hopes had once more been postponed. Nevertheless he firmly believed that Saxon authority was an infliction which should be removed at the earliest possible opportunity.⁴

On receipt of the news of the Fenian failure in Ireland the Irish Canadian made no attempt to conceal its sympathies. Every issue of the paper contained numerous articles and editorials from the Irish Press on the events in Ireland. The editor carried reports from the different Irish papers and commented personally on the arrests and trials of the Fenian conspirators. In general he argued that the trials were a mockery of justice and an example of

4. "News from Home", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 46, December 6, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-2.

British tyranny. He labelled constitutional rights in Ireland a mockery, a delusion and a snare.⁵ Freedom of Speech and the Press had disappeared and he prophesied that the increased intimidation of the people would only result in more hatred of the British and a greater desire for independence.⁶ Although the initial struggle had failed, he professed hope in the future.

The editor consoled himself with the evidence that the Brotherhood had the support of Catholics and Protestants alike. He pointed to Thomas Clarke Luby, the son of a Protestant minister and the proprietor of the seized Irish People, as a good example of the strong support which existed for Ireland's cause among both Catholics and Protestants.⁷ In reply to a letter from a Protestant Irish nationalist asking where the Irish Canadian would place the liberal Irish Protestant in the struggle for Ireland's freedom, the editor replied that the liberal Irish Protestants would stand alongside the Irish Catholics in the struggle for the independence of Ireland.⁸

5. "News From Home" (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 45, November 29, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-2.

6. "The Connaught Patriot", The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 40, October 25, 1865, p. 4, col. 5.

7. "Thomas Clarke Luby", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 49, December 27, 1865, p. 4, col. 3-4.

8. "A Word to Hibernicus", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 18, May 10, 1865, p. 4, col. 5.

While the nationalists lamented the Brotherhood's failure as a radical reform movement in Ireland but maintained hope in the future, the Canadian Freeman interpreted the arrests of the Fenian leaders as an indication that the bubble was beginning to burst and that Fenianism was headed towards its demise.⁹ The editor denied the accusation leveled against him that he had no sympathy with the grievances of the Irish or opposition to the misgovernment in Ireland.¹⁰ He assured his readers that he sympathized deeply but that he felt that the Fenian movement would only result in disaster. Consequently he supported the Catholic Press and a large portion of the Bishops and clergy in opposing the movement. He pointed out that he did not oppose organizations such as Fenianism because of lack of sympathy for Ireland's wrongs but because such organizations had no hope of success. In his opinion the recent attempt at insurrection only proved that the British government was more than a match for any secret organization intent on liberating Ireland by force. He praised the government for showing moderation and clemency in its treatment of the conspirators commenting that the authorities could have waited for an outbreak and destroyed Fenianism in blood.¹¹

9. "The Beginning of the End", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 23, October 5, 1865, p. 2, col. 3-4.

10. "The Lessons of the Hour", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 15, October 12, 1865, p. 2, col. 2-3.

11. "The Beginning of the End", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, op. cit.

He considered the only regrettable aspect of the affair to be the suffering of those moved by patriotic motives while the self-seeking instigators remained free.

While Moylan agreed that there were times when it was noble to die for one's country he believed that there were also times when it was foolish.¹² In his opinion to die as a Fenian would be foolish. He emphasized that one had always to consider the possibility of success and he reaffirmed his belief that Ireland's wrongs could be removed by legal and constitutional means without recourse to violence. In his opinion the only thing that Fenianism had done for Ireland was to bring trouble to the country.

The editor of the Canadian Freeman maintained that the bad days for Ireland were gone and that things would improve; though he admitted that something was wrong when there was poverty and suffering in a country which had the resources Ireland had.¹³ He called on the British government to adopt measures to ease the situation and denounced those who disregarded constitutional means and embarrassed their friends by a show of force just when the House of Commons was tending towards a redress of Ireland's grievances.

12. "Our View of the Case", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 26, Thursday, December 28, 1865, p. 2. col. 5.

13. "Ireland", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 16, October 19, 1865, p. 2, col. 4-5.

With the failure of the insurrection in Ireland Fenianism in the homeland was forced further underground. Immediate plans for radical reform had to be postponed as Fenian leaders were arrested or forced into voluntary exile in other Irish communities in Australia or the United States. Consequently with the defeat of the Brotherhood in Ireland the center of Fenian activity and sympathy shifted to the United States.

Shortly after the failure of the insurrection in Ireland the Fenian Brotherhood of America held a convention in Philadelphia during which it established the Irish Republic in exile and adopted a Republican form of organization. O'Mahoney's title was changed from that of Head Center to President of the Irish Republic. Various Departments of State were established such as the Departments of War, Finance and so forth. A Congress and Senate were also established and members selected to fill these bodies. Many of the anti-Fenian newspapers made great fun of this latest Fenian move by commenting sarcastically on the formation of a Republic with no country and a War Department with no army.

Several weeks later rumors spread that the Senate of the Brotherhood, led by New York merchant, William Roberts, had impeached President O'Mahoney for misappropriation of funds. The Senate claimed that O'Mahoney had issued \$68,000 worth of Irish Republican bonds through an

unauthorized agent. The result of this accusation was a split in the Brotherhood into the O'Mahoney and the Roberts sections. The supporters of O'Mahoney held a conference in Chicago in which the majority voted to continue their support of O'Mahoney and to oppose the Senate's demand that O'Mahoney resign. Subsequently the Roberts faction assembled in Philadelphia in a demonstration of support for Roberts and decided on a Fenian attack of Canada to obtain a base for the liberation of Ireland.

Although these issues would in time divide and strain the sentiments of the Irish Canadian, the paper's first reaction to the Brotherhood's activities in the United States was one of interest and encouragement at the evidence of the growing sympathy for Fenianism among the Irish-Americans. The editor noted with pleasure the large Fenian demonstrations and particularly the gathering in New York's Jones' Wood to hear the Fenian leaders address the Brotherhood.¹⁴ He was pleased to remark that the Irish in America, though they had escaped the evils of life in Ireland, were still willing to abandon their new life to fight for Ireland's independence. He was particularly interested in O'Mahoney's statement that the Fenians were now ready to free Ireland but warned the Irish in America that though the American people disliked the British they could not be counted upon

14. "Great Fenian Demonstration", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 29, August 2, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-3.

to go to war for Ireland's cause. He advised the Irish not to put faith in anything other than their own resources and to await another day if they lacked sufficient men or arms; for failure would only lead to increased British tyranny in Ireland.

The editor stressed that the true friends of Ireland cared little what agency liberated the homeland so long as freedom was obtained.¹⁵ Nevertheless having eliminated persuasion as a potential remedy, he relied on Fenianism as the only national political movement which offered any hope for the future. He was further convinced that the destiny of Ireland lay in the hands of the Irish in North America and that the only possible way to relieve her sufferings was by revolution. Though he had hoped that Ireland would be spared such suffering, he now believed it had to come.

The Irish Canadian was particularly encouraged by the mass gathering of Fenians at the funeral of the Deputy Head Center in St. Louis, Missouri¹⁶ for the editor saw it as an indication of the influence and power of the Fenian Brotherhood among the Irish nationalists of the United

15. "A Real Friend of Ireland", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 36, September 27, 1865, p.4, col.1-2.

16. Henry O'Clarence McCarthy was deputy Head Center of the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States. His funeral was important because the Archbishop of St. Louis refused to permit it as originally planned by the Fenians and he forbid burial in the Catholic cemetery. Some 15 to 20 thousand attended but were forced to comply with the Archbishop's demands that no insignia of the Society be displayed.

States.¹⁷ In his view this incident was proof of the extent to which Fenianism had captured the minds and hearts of the vast majority of Irish-Americans. He praised the Fenians' show of power and pointed to their obedience and moderation in accepting the Archbishop's demand that they remove their badges as proof of their willingness to obey the clergy in all lawful things. In his view this compliance with clerical wishes destroyed the accusation of anti-clericalism made by some editors against the Brotherhood. He admitted being sinful if it was a sin to be patriotic for he wished every success to any organization whose sole object was Ireland's freedom.

Since it was pro-Fenian in sentiment and a staunch supporter of Fenian aims, the Irish Canadian looked upon the split in the movement between President O'Mahoney and Senator Roberts as a serious and undesirable development. It would be difficult to determine for certain, but the editor was probably pro-O'Mahoney and he looked upon the Roberts faction as a brash upstart. When the Senate of the newly formed Irish Republic accused O'Mahoney of misappropriation of funds and attempted to depose him the Irish Canadian disqualified itself as a capable judge of the quarrel with the excuse that it was not connected to the Brotherhood and hence was not familiar with all the evidence.¹⁸

17. "Funeral of Henry O'Clarence McCarthy", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 35, September 20, 1865, p.4, col. 1-3.

18. "John O'Mahoney and Senate of the Fenian Brotherhood", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 47, Dec. 13, 1865, p.4, col. 5.

The editor regretted that differences divided the two factions and urged the members to unite reminding them that their internal divisions were only pleasing their enemies and traitors.¹⁹ He pointed out that the Irish in America had a great opportunity of redressing Ireland's wrongs but rather than making use of it they were weakening their position through internal quarrels and disputes.

The editor was convinced that after seven years of existence the Fenian movement would not disappear and emphasized that it was the cause which was important not the man.²⁰ To the editor it was a matter of indifference who ran the actual organization, for success depended not on one man alone. He was sure the cause would succeed for the thousands of American Fenians would not be diverted from their aim by a mere quarrel in the Council. The editor described the Fenian cause as resting on patriotism and justice and an instrument in the hands of God as a means of accomplishing some hidden design.²¹ The only condition lacking among the Irish of America to enable them to accomplish their mission was unity.²²

19. "Disunion", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 50, January 3, 1866, p. 4, col. 3-4.

20. "John O'Mahoney and Senate of the Fenian Brotherhood", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, op. cit.

21. "Disunion", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, op. cit.

22. The split between O'Mahoney and Roberts continued. In the spring of 1866 Stephens arrived in America to attempt a reconciliation of the two factions but failed. O'Mahoney resigned as President in Stephens' favor but Roberts continued as leader of his faction. This state of affairs continued until after the 1866 raid at Fort Erie.

While the Irish Canadian supported the growth of the Brotherhood in the neighboring republic to the south, the Canadian Freeman opposed its transfer to American soil; denounced the Fenian movement in the United States as an exploitation of hard working Irish servant girls; and labelled it a swindle.²³ The editor believed that the Brotherhood was being used by its leaders to steal the contributions of patriotic Irish-Americans. He denounced their plan of an invasion of Ireland as an impossible dream.

The Canadian Freeman viewed the dispute between O'Mahoney and Roberts as a complete vindication of its original views of O'Mahoney and the end of the movement and as the fulfillment of a prediction made six months earlier that the finale of Fenianism would be a quarrel over funds.²⁴ The editor described the Fenian leaders as lazy adventurers who used the movement as a means of making a living from picnics, fairs and Irish Republic bonds. He believed that the unfortunate aspect of the whole affair was that the ridicule and contempt which the movement had brought to Irish patriotism would long outlive the O'Mahoney bubble.

23. "That's the Way the Money Goes", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 22, November 30, 1865, p. 2, col. 7-8.

24. "Squabbling Over the Spoils", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 24, December 14, 1865, p. 2, col. 5-6, p. 2, col. 3.

The editor interpreted the Roberts-O'Mahoney quarrel as the death ring of the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States. While he admitted that he did not think O'Mahoney would concede without a fight he nevertheless believed the movement had run its allotted span in the United States.²⁵ He emphasized the New York Herald's abandonment of the Fenian cause and interpreted this as an indication of the changed opinion of the American public on the question of Fenianism. In his view the Americans did not want a war with Great Britain and consequently the Fenians' popularity was on the wane. So convinced of this was he that on January 25th he entitled his editorial on the demise of the movement "The Failure of Fenianism - The Vindication of O'Connell's Moral Force Policy".²⁶ Fenianism no longer had the support of the Irish Americans and no longer posed a serious threat. He dismissed the report by some American journals that Fenianism was extending itself and noted with pleasure that many young men were accepting the advice of their elders and the clergy and were abandoning the Fenian Brotherhood. He emphasized that Ireland was not even united on the idea of Home Rule, let alone violent revolution and therefore the inevitable failure of the Fenian movement was not unexpected.

25. "The Fenian Embroglio", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 29, January 18, 1866, p. 2, col. 5.

26. (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 30, January 25, 1866, p. 2, col. 5-6.

For the most part, however, the two Irish Canadian papers tended to disregard the Fenian quarrel in the United States. The pro-Fenian one probably did not wish to split the movement in Canada or aggravate the situation by openly taking a strong stand on one side or the other. It also probably believed that the less attention brought to the affair the better. The Canadian Freeman, being anti-Fenian, considered it sufficient to remark that the movement was about to end as it had predicted. It, also, probably believed that the less said in public about this Irish internal quarrel the better. It was giving the Irish a bad enough reputation as it was without another Irish paper running the Irish Americans down, especially when they already appeared defeated.

Once the split in the American Brotherhood was complete the Roberts faction increased its threats of an invasion of British North America. If the Irish Press of Toronto appeared to disregard these rumors the other Canadian journals certainly did not. The Fenian threats constituted a serious concern to many Canadians, especially the Protestants. The Canadian papers took great interest in the developments in the Fenian Brotherhood and noted in particular the threats of an attack on Canada. While O'Mahoney opposed an attack on British North America the Roberts faction strongly favored it and in the fall and winter of 1865-66 Roberts made numerous speeches threatening

Canada and promising her liberation from British tyranny within a few weeks.

The Irish Press of Toronto was concerned with this radical and unexpected twist of events. The Irish Canadian's reaction was a divided one to the shift of Fenianism from Ireland to the United States and the subsequent division in the American Brotherhood. While, on the one hand, it supported the development and extension of the Brotherhood in the United States and sympathized with its main objective of a free Ireland, it could not equally sanction the Roberts' faction's threat to bring war to British North America where the Irish Canadians were content to live as British subjects. The American Fenians failed to realize that the grievances in Ireland had no counterpart in Canada and the Irish Canadian would have been satisfied to see the Irish of the homeland enjoying the same degree of responsible government and self-autonomy which Irish Canadians enjoyed in Canada. The Irish Canadian consequently supported the Brotherhood in America but opposed Roberts' plans of armed intervention in the national existence of the self-governing British American colonies.

Most Canadians, including the Canadian Fenian sympathizers, shared this opinion and opposed a raid on the Canadian frontier. The new year saw the Canadian branch of the Fenian Brotherhood address a circular to the American members denouncing the recent proposal for a Fenian invasion

of Canada. The address, signed the "District Center" and dated Toronto, February 1, 1866, stated that the Canadian Fenians fully supported O'Mahoney in his struggle against the Senate.²⁷ They agreed with Head Center Stephens in his denunciation of those who wished to divert the energy of the Brotherhood from the liberation of Ireland to making war on a peaceful people.

"...Therefore, we, whose sole object is the liberation of Ireland, most earnestly protest against any recognition, by the Brotherhood, of men who, in open defiance of all authority, persist in endeavoring to turn the organization from its legitimate true, and honourable course, and attempt to inaugurate a policy wrong in principle, impracticable as a means to the ends they profess to seek; and treacherous and fatal to Ireland, for her delay is death."

The address appealed to the American members of the Brotherhood to disregard advice which would divert their attention from the holy work of liberating Ireland. They concluded by promising their support in the ensuing struggle for Ireland's freedom.

The Irish Canadian carried the story but did not make any editorial comment on the address. Perhaps it decided that the less said about visual proof of a Fenian organization in Canada the better. To denounce it or to praise it would either way lead the paper into trouble with

27. "The Fenians in Canada", Article from the Toronto Correspondent of the Cincinnati Enquirer, The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 4, February 14, 1866, p. 5, col. 4-5.

one element of the populace. Nevertheless the story, probably quite succinctly, expressed its views and reaction to the proposed invasion of Canada.

As far as Roberts' threat of an invasion of British North America was concerned both Irish papers opposed the plan and discounted the possibility of a raid. In response to the mounting tension over the threats of a Fenian raid intensified by rumors in the N.Y. Herald and the Toronto Leader, the Irish Canadian sought to allay such unwarranted fears and assure the people that there was no danger of a Fenian attack.

The editor admitted personal ignorance of Fenianism but assured his readers that it was not the dreadful thing depicted in the city's daily press.²⁸ On the contrary it had accomplished good in Ireland. He noted that there was nothing like good wholesome fear to remedy some of Ireland's ills. He assured the citizens of Canada, however, that they need have no fear of Fenianism's progress for it aimed not at Canada but at the liberation of Ireland. He warned that the country had more to fear from annexationists in her midst than from Fenian raids.

28. "Groundless Fears", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 41, November 1, 1865, p. 4, col. 2-3.

The editor strongly denounced the press stories on the Fenians as an attempt to create a sensation. The authors of the reports, in his view, knew absolutely nothing about the Brotherhood's organization, its aims or objectives. He especially criticized the editor of the Leader for alarming the populace.²⁹ Such a course of action was consistent with that journal's past performances. It was the "acknowledged organ of Orangeism" in the Province and since the Orange Lodge was attempting to arouse the citizens against Fenianism it was only understandable that their paper should assist them in the cause. While he laid the major responsibility for the alarm on the Leader, he also included the Mayor's actions and the Government's decision to place 500 troops on the frontier. In conclusion he argued that those who took up the cry of Fenian raids, robberies and murders were either evil-minded people or fools.

The editor admitted that the atmosphere of the city was thick with rumors of raids and bank robberies but he maintained that such reports were not founded on reliable facts.³⁰ He believed that the Fenians intended to liberate Ireland not invade Canada and were above such outlaw

29. "The Fenian Scare", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 44, November 22, 1865, p. 4, col. 2-3.

30. "Fenian Excitement", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 43, November 15, 1865, p. 4. col. 2-3.

tactics as attacking peaceful citizens and robbing banks. The editor pointed out that Stephens, the Irish Fenian leader, preferred a direct assault on Ireland rather than an attack on Canada and he remarked that Canadians should feel somewhat relieved at this news.³¹ He went on to declare that he saw no advantage to be gained for Ireland by an attack on the Province. Such a step would destroy the sympathy which Canadians felt for Ireland's wrongs and bring war to a peaceful people. He believed that there was no need to fear a Fenian attack on Canada. Thousands of Canadians would be converted from sympathy with Ireland's cause by such a course of action.

The Canadian Freeman, with equal certitude and consistency, discounted the danger of a Fenian invasion and opposed the Fenian plan of armed intervention in British North America. The editor ignored the various reports of Fenian aims.³² He considered the rumor that they intended to invade Canada interesting but dismissed it as a canard not worthy of further discussion because the interest and duty of the American government, the loyalty of Canadians to their country and their willingness to defend their homes as well as the honor and justice of the Irish everywhere, would doom such an effort to failure. The editor expressed

31. "Arrival of James Stephens", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 17, May 16, 1866, p. 4, col. 2-3.

32. "The Philadelphia Convention", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 17, October 26, 1865, p. 2, col. 5.

amazement at the report that Irishmen supported such a foolish and unjust scheme. He advised that an attack on Canada would destroy any sympathy which the Irish cause enjoyed in the world.

At this same time, the New York Herald's correspondent was sending "sensational" reports on the state of alarm in Toronto over a suspected raid. The correspondent reported a growing excitement over Fenianism, great military activity and numerous desertions of Irish Regulars of the British Army in Canada to the United States.³³ The Toronto Leader was also weighing the possibilities of a Fenian raid on Canada since the attempted insurrection in Ireland had failed.

The Canadian Freeman pointed out the harmful effects such sensation writing could produce.³⁴ The editor maintained that the weakness of the Fenian cause and the feebleness of their means were so apparent as to eliminate any excuse for spreading false and unfounded rumors. He wondered why stories were published when no rational man expected any trouble.

33. "The Fenians Again", (Ed), The Leader, Vol. 13, No. 3852, Saturday, October 28, 1865, p. 2, col. 3.

34. "Panic Writing", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 21, November 23, 1865, p. 2, col. 7.

With regard to reported crimes by Fenians the Canadian Freeman suggested that it would be better if crimes were not committed by cut-throats under the guise of Fenianism and pointed out that the Fenians had probably been blamed for more plots and deeds than they had accomplished or ever conceived of.³⁵

Nevertheless, despite these assurances by the editor, the Canadian Freeman reported that the people were concerned and worried about the threat of a Fenian invasion.³⁶ The editor assured the populace that a raid or invasion remained highly unlikely considering all the difficulties with which the invading Fenians would meet. He considered an attempted raid a folly and an improbability.³⁷ The Fenian leaders valued their lives too much to enter British North America and the American Government would immediately arrest the movement should the Fenians take such action. An invasion was out of the question; an attempted raid was the worst that could happen.³⁸ He also laid particular stress on the

35. "A Foolish Story", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 20, November 16, 1865, p. 2, col. 6.

36. "Rumored Invasion of Canada by the Fenians", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 19, November 9, 1865, p. 2, col. 3-4.

37. "More Threats", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 31, February 1, 1866, p. 2, col. 5.

38. "The Fenian Excitement", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 37, March 15, 1866, p. 2, col. 8.

loyalty of the Irish Catholics of Upper Canada, no doubt in defence of Orange imputations on their loyalty and emphasized that the Irish of Canada would never aid the Fenians.³⁹

On June 1, 1866 when the raid did occur at Fort Erie, both Irish papers were sure that the Fenians would never attack. Both had all along opposed and discounted such a move though for different reasons.

With the growth of Fenianism in Ireland and the United States each paper had adopted a different view of the movement in these countries. The Irish Canadian was pro-Fenian in sympathy and hence looked with favor on the growing strength of the Brotherhood in both the homeland and the American states. With the capture of the Fenian leaders in late 1865 it regretted the premature failure of the Irish Brotherhood but looked with confidence to the sympathetic American Fenians to complete the task of freeing Ireland. The Canadian Freeman, however, denounced the Brotherhood as harmful to the Irish in both Ireland and the United States. The split in the leadership of the American Fenians further divided the two editors. The Irish Canadian regretted the incident and urged the American Fenians to settle their quarrel as quickly as possible.

39. "Rumored Invasion of Canada by the Fenians", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, op. cit.

The Canadian Freeman, on the other hand, believed the ensuing struggle would destroy the Brotherhood in America just as the Police had dissipated the society in Ireland. As for the threat of a Fenian attack on British North America, neither editor expected or condoned such action. The Irish Canadian saw it as a diversion from the Brotherhood's true purpose and the Canadian Freeman maintained that the American Fenians lacked the means and the courage to undertake an invasion.

PART II
FENIANISM IN TORONTO
CHAPTER I
DEFENCE OF THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Although Fenianism as a movement was becoming more and more popular and renowned both in Ireland and the United States in the early sixties, it remained practically unknown among the Irish of Canada. There were a few indications of Fenian sympathy among the St. Patrick Day orators but there were no apparent Fenian circles in Toronto. In the late fall of 1864, however, the Fenian movement with its expressed threat to British Protestant ascendancy was vividly impressed upon the minds of the Protestants of Toronto. Their fears were aroused when armed members of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, an Irish Catholic charitable and protective association, marched through the streets on November 5th, the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot.¹ The general assumption among the Protestants was that these demonstrators were Fenians and that the Brotherhood had come to British North America.

1. November 5 was the anniversary of the discovery of the plot organized in 1605 by Guy Fawkes to blow up the British House of Parliament. It was a tradition for the Orangemen to commemorate it as a victory of English Protestantism over Catholic treason.

Despite the fact that the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman were at extreme odds on the question of Fenianism in general and the growth of the movement in Ireland and the United States, they were united in defence of the Hibernians and the Irish Catholic community against the criticism of the Protestant population. In response to the Hibernians' march the Globe and the Leader denounced the Irish Catholics for resorting to force. In reply, the Irish Catholic Press, instead of criticizing the marchers, stressed the Catholics' need to defend themselves against the Orangemen due to the lack of protection afforded by the city authorities. The Globe stressed the need for strict enforcement of law and order to prevent insurrection by armed Irish Catholic Fenians. The Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman adamantly denied that the demonstrators were Fenians and that Fenianism existed in Toronto.

The Irish in Toronto were divided between two religious groups: the Protestants and the Catholics. A significant number of the Irish Protestants also belonged to the Orange Order. The Loyal Orange Association had been officially introduced into Canada under the guidance of Ogle R. Gowan when the Grand Orange Lodge of British North America was formed in Brockville in 1830.² Originally an Irish Protestant Society, established in the century

2. Leslie H. Saunders, The Story of Orangeism, The Highlights in its Origins and a Century and a Quarter of Service to the Christian Church, Canada, and the Empire; Toronto, Compiled and Published for the Grand Orange Lodge of Ontario West, 1941, p. 48.

following the "Glorious" Revolution of 1688 to protect Protestant Christianity and the unity of the British Empire from Roman Catholicism, it was transposed to Canada by Protestant settlers from the time of the Conquest on and particularly in the early years of the nineteenth century. It brought to the New World the animosity and religious warfare which characterized Orange-Catholic relations in Ireland. In time it became a particularly significant force in Toronto where there was a large Irish population and a number of the influential men of Toronto and Canada West were Orangemen. In 1859, for example, F.H. Medcalf, later to become mayor of Toronto, was chosen first County Master for the city. There were a number of Orange-Catholic confrontations in the fifties and sixties in Toronto. In 1860 Orange and Protestant sentiments were aroused to fever pitch when the Prince of Wales refused to accept the Orangemen's manifestations of loyalty. At the same time, however, the Prince greeted representatives of the Catholic Church during his tour. By the sixties, relations between the Toronto Orangemen and Irish Catholics, which had rarely been good, were becoming more and more strained.

Early in the autumn of 1864 an Orange demonstration in Belfast, Ireland turned into a riot during which Catholic churches, convents and homes were ransacked. This incident increased the already existing tension between the Orangemen and the Irish Catholics of Toronto so much so that the

Catholics feared a similar treatment at the hands of the Orangemen on Guy Fawkes' Day. The Orange Society of Toronto had made it a tradition to commemorate Guy Fawkes' Day by burning the traitor in effigy on November 5th. It was reported among the Irish Catholics that the Orangemen planned an especially large gathering that fall and intended to burn in effigy not only Guy Fawkes, but also the Pope and the Irish Catholic nationalist politician, Daniel O'Connell.³ Rumors circulated that the Orangemen contemplated a repetition in Toronto of what had occurred in Belfast.

The Irish Catholics were well aware of these plans and were determined to prevent them by armed resistance, if necessary. The Canadian Freeman advised the authorities to adopt the necessary precautions to avoid a re-enactment of the Belfast riot in Toronto.⁴ Unfortunately no such precautionary action was taken and the Catholics felt compelled to defend themselves. The onus for such action fell on the Hibernian Benevolent Society, an Irish Catholic organization which had been established in the late fifties as a charitable and protective society. Members of the society planned to gather at various churches, convents and religious institutions on the evening of November 5th. in

3. "Fifth of November - Almost a Serious Disturbance, Large Bodies of Men Patrolling the Streets", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 277, Monday, November 7, 1864, p. 2, col. 4.

4. "Breakers Ahead", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. III, No. 16, October 20, 1864, p.2, col. 5.

case any trouble should erupt. It was said that even guns and ammunition had been stored as reserves in the offices of the Irish Catholic newspaper, the Canadian Freeman.

The Orangemen assembled on the evening of November 5th. in their various lodge rooms where they celebrated the occasion within the confines of their halls in a quiet and orderly manner.⁵ The gatherings broke up about eleven o'clock and the only display was a parade by some sixty to one hundred boys with fife and drum who had no connection with the Orange Lodges. The Orangemen had contemplated burning Guy Fawkes in effigy that evening but they abandoned the idea. Whether or not this decision was a result of the threat by the Catholics is hard to determine. Certainly the Orangemen's action was unusual since they had burned Guy Fawkes in effigy for years.⁶

While the Orangemen celebrated inside, some Irish Catholics, members of the Toronto Hibernian Benevolent Society, gathered in groups of two, three or a dozen outside the local Catholic churches, convents, religious institutions and homes of prominent Hibernians. They were armed with guns and pikes but remained peaceful. Towards

5. "Fifth of November...", (Ed), The Globe, op. cit.

6. "Orange Supper", The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 279, Wednesday, November 9, 1864, p. 2, col. 6.

midnight they began to assemble into larger groups in three different parts of the city. Several citizens and special constables saw them marching four deep and one hundred in number with guns and pikes on College Avenue. Another group of approximately sixty marched with apparent military skill down Queen Street. Later in the evening, around two o'clock, shots were heard in the west end and a few minutes later an equal number in the east end, apparently in response. After that no further was seen or heard of them.

These events of Saturday night and early Sunday morning created a good deal of unrest and excitement among the Protestant citizens of Toronto, especially the Orangemen. Reports of what had actually occurred were sketchy rather than explicit and vague rumors of armed men marching the streets at midnight intent on bloodshed created a sense of insecurity and excitement the likes of which had been unknown in the city for a long time. Perhaps the most significant aspect of the affair was its surprise element. No one had been aware of the existence of the group of armed men. The thought that they had apparently drilled and trained in the city for months with no one noticing or reporting it and the realization that the city was especially vulnerable to them during the night only increased the exciting sense of insecurity.

The Globe emphasized the vulnerability of the city to the threats of the armed men and warned against a

repetition in Toronto of the riots of Belfast. The editor denounced the men for resorting to arms and compared their action to that of the Orangemen who had behaved lawfully and orderly. He counseled the authorities to be prepared for these "fanatical religionists" and maintained that these armed Catholic Hibernians were indeed Fenians. In his opinion, all the intelligent Catholics shared his view of the event and he advised everyone to remain quiet and allow the authorities to deal with the agitators.⁷ The Leader adopted a similar view of the events. It denounced the marchers for taking the law into their own hands and called for strong suppression of such illegal action.⁸

In reply to these accusations the Irish Canadian defended the Hibernians' action and stressed the Catholics' need for self-defence.⁹ The Irish Catholics were well aware of the true character and intentions of the Orangemen and consequently they were prepared to protect their lives and property. Though all sensible Catholics and Protestants had forgotten the Gunpowder Plot and Guy Fawkes, each year the "scarlet" brothers commemorated the 5th. This year the Orangemen had decided to follow the example of their brothers

7. "The Fenians and the Fifth", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 278, Tuesday, November 8, 1864, p. 2, col. 4.

8. "The Fenians", (Ed), The Leader, Vol. 12, No. 3549, Tuesday, November 8, 1864, p. 2, col. 2.

9. "Fifth of November", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 44, Wednesday, November 9, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-2.

in Belfast, but Canada was not Ireland and the Irish Catholics were not foolish enough to rely on an Orange mayor for the protection of their lives and property. Years previous the Irish Catholics had realized that if they were to be able to exercise their rights and protect their homes they would have to have recourse to their own arms and defence. There had been sufficient incidents of Orange aggression against Irish Catholics in the past; such as the murder of an Irish Catholic by Orangemen during an Irish Catholic-Orange confrontation in 1858, the Orange plot to blow up the House of Providence, a Catholic institution, in 1856, and the attack on several Irish Catholic gentlemen by an Orange mob during the National Festival of Ireland in 1858, to convince the Irish Catholics of the nature and spirit of Toronto Orangeism. These and other incidents of Orange violence against Catholics provided ample evidence and proof that the Irish Catholics could not afford to rely on civic protection. The civic authorities from the mayor to the lowest constable would be true to the Orange oath and false to their oaths as guardians and upholders of the law should there be a renewed attack on a Catholic religious institution. Knowing this, the Catholics were ready, willing and able to protect themselves. Though the Irish Catholics were law-abiding and peaceable people who wished all classes to enjoy the fullest political and religious freedom they were equally determined to protect it for themselves.

The Canadian Freeman claimed no intention of defending the Hibernians' action or vindicating their cause but the editor did excuse their action in the light of Orange bigotry.¹⁰ While it was true that the Catholics of Canada were better protected by law than those of Ireland unfortunately the laws were administered by members of a secret organization who were professed enemies of the Catholic Church. Thus the administration of the law was characterized by bigotry and partizanship and Catholics could not rely on it for protection. Consequently, unable to depend on civic authorities for security from Orangeism or on the law for justice, the Catholics were forced to take action on their own initiative and to provide their own defence.

The Canadian Freeman offered several examples of sectarian bigotry as proof of the Catholics' need for self-defence. The mayor was a well-known Orangeman and a "fanatical partizan, in whom honest men can have no confidence".¹¹ In May of 1864, armed Orangemen had attempted to obstruct a Catholic Corpus Christi procession on the grounds of the Catholic church and its adjoining property. The mayor, though present, made little attempt to restrict the Orangemen and the Globe and the Leader paid scant

10. "Startling Disclosures and Nothing Revealed", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 18, Thursday, November 10, 1864, p. 2, col. 3-4.

11. Ibid.

attention to the matter. Well aware of similar previous civic responses to Orange aggression against them and convinced of the danger they faced, the Catholics took defensive action to protect their lives and property. On the basis of previous injustices suffered by the Catholics at the hands of the Protestants, it was understandable that some Catholics would feel compelled to bypass the civil authorities and adopt preventive measures of their own.

While such things are permitted, and with impunity indulged in, it is not to be wondered at, if some who perhaps possess more daring than discretion, should be-times overstep the bounds of prudence, and seek redress by means unlawful, unwarranted, and deplored by the more cool and considerate portion of his fellow-sufferers.¹²

Although Moylan considered the Hibernians' action as justifiable under the circumstances, he strongly denied any involvement in it and refuted the accusation made against his paper and his co-religionists that they had been a party to the incident and had resorted to force in violation of law and order. He adamantly denied that guns and ammunition had been stored in the newspaper's office. He opposed and denounced the attempt to brand the Canadian Freeman and all Irish Catholics as participants in or instigators of the armed demonstration. The incident had been the work of a few less restrained members of the Hibernian Benevolent Society and not of the Irish Catholic population in general.

12. Ibid.

The Irish Catholic Press was not alone in its support for the Hibernians, for even the Bishop of Toronto, in a letter on the incident, tended to defend and excuse their action. His Excellency, John Lynch, in the name of all the Catholics of Toronto, protested against the November 5th. display of arms which he labelled foolish and unwarranted.¹³ Nevertheless, although he hoped that the demonstrators would see the folly of their conduct, he also criticized the Orangemen for holding their procession of the same day and for attempting to revive passions and bitter memories best forgotten. Even the Catholic church accepted the natural law which allowed an individual or a community to defend itself when the law could or would not. In an effort to relieve the tension and avoid future clashes the Bishop called for a ban on all organizations other than charitable and benevolent ones and emphasized that as long as the Orange Association continued its processions and threatened the rights of the Catholics then the Church would be unable to prevent counter-organizations.

Although Bishop Lynch opposed and criticized the Hibernians' extremism in resorting to arms, the Globe was dissatisfied with this reaction for it had expected him to condemn the Hibernians' march.¹⁴ The Globe had relied on

13. "Letter From Right Rev. Dr. Lynch, Bishop of Toronto", letter to editor of Globe, The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 45, November 16, 1864, p. 5, col. 1.

14. "Bishop Lynch's Letter", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 282, Saturday, November 12, 1864, p. 2, col. 4.

the Catholic Hierarchy and clergy to denounce the Hibernians' recourse to force for it was convinced that the leading Catholics, lay and clerical, would support its position. To the editor's surprise, however, the Bishop adopted the same attitude as the Irish Catholic Press of the city; both offered a defence and explanation of the Hibernians' action based on a hatred of Orangeism and fear of Orange aggression. The Globe had expected that the sober, respectable Catholics would be the Protestants' best allies in condemning the lawless demonstration by religious fanatics but instead the Irish Catholic Press had placed more effort on explaining and defining the Irish Catholics' action and motives than on denouncing the illegal and violent means they had employed.¹⁵

The Globe was not prepared to admit that the Catholics had any real justification in arguing that they were the victims of religious partizanship. On the contrary the editor was particularly angered by the fact that the Catholics, who sought to introduce anarchy into the peaceful society of Toronto, were the same class of society that enjoyed the fullest protection of the law.¹⁶ If the Irish Catholics were discriminated against or treated

15. "The Lynch-Law Advocates", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 282, Saturday, November 12, 1864, p. 2, col. 4.

16. "Faction V.S. Order", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 287, Friday, November 18, 1864, p. 2, col. 2-3.

unjustly; then they might have cause for complaint but such was not the case. Not only did they enjoy all the rights and privileges of every citizen but they even had separate religious and educational privileges.

The wide division between the Globe and the Irish Catholic Press in their reactions to the November 5th. incident was due to their different interpretations of the underlying significance of the incident and the true character of those who had participated in the march. In the opinion of the Globe the demonstrators were "wholly seekers for the subversion of an existing government";¹⁷ for the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman they were valiant defenders of the Catholic faith. The Globe was convinced that the demonstrators were Fenians intent on undermining the established authority; but the Irish Catholic papers failed to see the Hibernians as a threat to national security and consequently refused to denounce them as anarchists and revolutionaries.

The Globe laid special stress on the threatening character of the Hibernians' action and consequently on the need for law and order to guard against possible revolution and insurrection. His fear of anarchy caused the editor to seek refuge in the tradition of respect for

17. "The Lynch-Law Advocates", (Ed), The Globe, op. cit.

established authority. The issue was not merely a struggle between Orangeism and Fenianism or a clash of opposing religious ideologies as the Irish Catholic Press was attempting to describe it.¹⁸ It was far more than the traditional religious quarrel between Orangeism and Catholicism; in fact it was a conflict between order and anarchy. Since the Globe feared that the demonstrators were Fenians it interpreted the armed march as merely an indication of the possible disturbances which the city and particularly the Protestant community might suffer at the hands of Irish nationalists imbued with the revolutionary and insurrectionist teachings of the Fenian Brotherhood. The very existence of the illegally constituted body of armed Hibernians posed a threat for they might usurp the functions and powers of the constituted authority. Yet the laws of the country had to be maintained and obeyed, regardless of who violated them. The duty of maintaining law and order in the land fell upon the civic authorities but if they proved incapable of enforcing the law then the Militia should be called in and if they proved inadequate the whole body of citizens should be relied upon to uphold the law. Any attempt at anarchy had to be defeated. It would be difficult but it had been accomplished in Ireland where the task was much more arduous.

18. "Faction v.s. Order", (Ed), The Globe, op cit.

This suggestion, by the Globe, of introducing into Canada the tactics and procedures of the Irish Constabulary to ferret out these supposed conspirators was a resort to extreme measures. The editor, of all people, would be the least expected to advocate such strong arm procedures as suspension of Habeas Corpus and mass arrests since up until then he had advised patience and warned against any rash action in dealing with the "Fenians". Prior to November 5th., he had favored lenient treatment of the "Fenians" and suggested that given enough time and freedom of expression they would hang themselves. No doubt the armed demonstration of November 5th. was more than he had anticipated from them and it convinced him that stronger action was required to combat them. In advocating severer police action he wished to support the legally constituted authority and at the same time avoid Orange retaliation. His main concern, however, was protecting properly established legal procedures and avoiding any resort to anarchy or disorder. Convinced that the Irish Catholics had established the Fenian Brotherhood in Canada, he favored severe police action to destroy the Brotherhood in the bud before it could incite the quarrels and violence it had in Ireland between the Catholics and the Orangemen, the nationalists and the British loyalists.

In reply to this plea for law and order the Irish Canadian agreed that the law should be respected by all

classes but pointed out that unfortunately it never was and never would be enforced against Orange infractions as long as the judges and policemen were Orangemen.¹⁹ If everyone respected the law and the law was justly administered, then there would be no need for such organizations as the Hibernians. However, this was not the case. Several passages from previous Globe editorials attacking the nationality and religion of the Irish in Canada and specific incidents in which Orange violations of the law were disregarded readily demonstrated that the Catholics could not be assured of constant justice and unbiased treatment at the hands of the Protestants. There should be respect for the majesty of the law but until Orange officials were replaced by impartial ones the Catholics would have little faith in the majesty of the law.

The editor also criticized the Globe's appeal for the use of British troops to quell the Irish disturbances and the suggestion that the city's military forces be used against the Irish. Instead of supporting the Globe's recommendations, the Irish Canadian maintained that this was merely one more step in George Brown's relentless war against the Catholics of Upper Canada. Whenever good men attempted to resolve their differences Brown was ever ready

19. "The Majesty of the Law", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 46, November 23, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-3.

to discourage the union of the Orange and the Green and renew the "smouldering embers of religious strife".²⁰ The November 5th, demonstration was just one more excuse for him to renew his campaign against the Catholics. Since the Mayor, the Police Chief and the Recorder were the sworn enemies of the Irish Catholics and they and half of the Militia of the city were Orangemen it would take a "demented fanatic" to dare whisper a suggestion such as Brown's: that the civic and military authority be allowed full reign to suppress the Irish Catholic demonstrators.

The Irish Catholic Press denounced the Globe's appeal for strict enforcement of law and order as unnecessary and impractical and also attempted to restrain the Globe's extremism by assuring it that there was no danger of a planned conspiracy by radical Irish Catholic nationalists. The Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman ardently defended the Hibernian marchers against the charge that they were Fenians and assured the populace that Fenianism did not exist in British North America. Consequently there was no reason to assume that the armed demonstrators were Fenian insurrectionists. They were merely what the Irish Press had claimed they were all along - Irish Catholics determined to protect themselves from possible Orange attack on Guy Fawkes Day.

20. "Mr. Brown's Remedy", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 45, November 16, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-2.

In commenting on this accusation against the Hibernians, the Irish Canadian denied that they were in any way connected to the Fenians and that the Irish Canadian was a Fenian organ. The Hibernian Benevolent Society and the Fenian Brotherhood were two quite distinct societies despite the attempts by the Globe and the Leader to confuse them in the public's mind. While the editor denied any connection with the Fenian Brotherhood, he did admit, however, to sympathy with the Fenians' aim of freeing Ireland from misrule and oppression and wished them early success in what he considered a worthy endeavor.²¹

With equal assurance, Moylan denied that Fenianism or any secret societies were supported by the Canadian Freeman or the majority of the Catholics in the Province. He considered himself even more opposed to these organizations than to Orangeism since the Catholic Church, whose opinion every Catholic should obey, had condemned them. Furthermore, they constituted an excuse for Orangeism and Orange activities. He conceded that the Canadian Government was generally as "just, liberal, and fair-dealing towards Catholics, as any other in the universe",²² and the Canadian Catholics, whose lives and interests were as

21. "Special Organisms", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 46, November 23, 1864, p. 4, col. 3-4.

22. (No title), (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 21, November 24, 1864, p. 2, col. 3-5.

closely connected to the country as any other man's, had no intention of supporting Fenianism. In the event of any demonstration by the Irish-American Fenians the Canadian Irish Catholics would occupy a front position in opposing their advance.

The men who had demonstrated on the 5th. were Hibernians, not Fenians. If Fenianism ever attempted to infiltrate the Hibernian Benevolent Society, many of the members would leave. The editor denied that certain Irish Catholics were attempting to establish the Fenian Brotherhood in Canada and thereby create in this country the quarrels and disagreements which distressed Ireland. If such a society existed the majority of Catholics would oppose it for they did not wish to see the feuds of Ireland transposed to Canada. Nevertheless, the Irish Catholics alone were not responsible for determining what Irish societies and troubles were imported from Ireland. Orangeism, which he called "the seed of discord in Ireland", had been imported though he regretted it.²³

The Canadian Freeman was equally quick to point out that the vast majority of the Catholics had taken no part in the incident of November 5th., were opposed to the use of force, and were respectful of lawful authority. It

23. "Startling Disclosures and Nothing Revealed", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, op. cit.

strongly denounced the attempt to implicate all the Catholics in the events of the evening and emphasized that the men involved were few in number and had acted on their own, independent of lay and clerical control.

This denial by the Irish Catholic Press that Fenianism existed in the city and the assurance that not all the Catholics had been involved in the march did little to reassure the Protestant community of Toronto that they had nothing to fear from the Irish Catholics. The Protestants still feared further trouble from the Hibernians and seriously questioned the Irish Catholics' loyalty to Canada and the British Crown. The Catholic character as well as the nationalist sentiments of the Fenians and the Hibernians gave the Protestants further cause for concern.

The editor of the Globe based his continued suspicion of the Irish Catholics on the reaction of the Catholic community itself to the events of that autumn. The Protestants of Toronto had awaited the reaction of the Catholic element to the violent display assured that the more responsible portion of the Irish Catholics would condemn such an illegal demonstration of sectarian bigotry.²⁴ The Protestants appeared mistaken, however, for the Roman Catholic Prelate, Bishop Lynch, published a letter which justified the event by attacking Orangeism. The Catholic

24. "Fenianism in Canada", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 292, Thursday, November 24, 1864, p. 2, col. 2-3.

Press, as a whole, the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman, supported the demonstrators as defenders of Catholic lives and property against a threatened Orange outrage. The Canadian Freeman even included a letter from a priest defending their cause. What were the Protestants to conclude? To many Protestants it appeared that the Catholics had encouraged the Fenians to continue their efforts. Now if the Protestants of Upper Canada suspected the Irish Catholics of disloyalty and took precautionary measures against an anticipated raid who were to blame but the Irish Catholics themselves?

This general suspicion and widespread questioning of Irish Catholic loyalty was further revealed and encouraged by the spread of numerous rumors of intended Fenian raids throughout the countryside along with reports that Catholics were arming and drilling at night.²⁵ In late November there were numerous rumors of threatened raids by Irish Catholic Fenians on Protestants during the forthcoming winter. There was a Fenian scare in the back country around Adjala, Peel and Orangeville and a widespread belief that the Fenians had invaded the country and were moving towards the Adjala area destroying farms and killing citizens as they went.²⁶ Such rumors did little to ease

25. "The Fenian Movement", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 312, Saturday, December 17, 1864, p. 2, col. 3.

26. "Fenina, Fenian Excitement in Orangeville, An Absurd Panic in Adjala, The Fenian Excitement in Peel", The Globe, Vol. XXI, No. 313, Monday, December 19, 1864, p. 1, col. 6.

the tension or reduce suspicions of the Irish Catholics' loyalty.

The Irish Catholic Press condemned this reaction on the part of the Protestants and decried the religious bigotry aroused by the issue; bigotry which was completely unwarranted. The Irish Catholic minority despaired of receiving justice at the hands of the Protestants who were convinced that there was a conspiracy against them and the Canadian Government. The Irish Catholic Press accused the Globe and the Leader of encouraging discrimination and inciting suspicion of the Irish Catholics. Both the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman pointed to the arrest and imprisonment of McGuire as a suspected Fenian and the arbitrary dismissal of Sergeant Major Cummins of the Toronto Police Force as examples of the sectarian hatred encouraged by the Protestant Press.²⁷ The Irish Canadian maintained that neither would receive justice because the authorities would be more loyal to the Orange Lodge than to the cause of justice.²⁸ An attack by vandals

27. John McGuire was arrested and charged with possession of pikes and pike handles on November 7th. Later he was freed but the confiscated pikes were never returned because they mysteriously disappeared. Cummins was dismissed from the Police Force for not revealing information he allegedly had on the events of November 5th. Although the Police Commission reinstated him, the Mayor opposed its decision.

28. "Law or No Law", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 45, November 16, 1864, p. 4, col. 3-4.

on an Orange Hall renewed the animosity between the two factions. The Canadian Freeman pointed to Mayor Medcalf and Alderman Moodie's spontaneous action of blaming the deed on the Catholics and Fenians as indicative of the true character of justice in Toronto. Such an accusation, based on mere suspicion, constituted an outrage.²⁹

In response to the mounting suspicion of the Irish Catholic community the Irish Catholic Press accused the Daily Press of inciting the people against the Irish Catholic population without cause and held them responsible for encouraging Protestant fears of Irish Catholic and "Fenian" atrocities. The Irish Canadian blamed the Globe and the Leader for causing the absurd panic and Fenian scares. It accused them of spreading false rumors, of arousing the public mind to a state of great excitement and then of expressing surprise at the recent developments. They had put the notion into the heads of the Protestants that the Hibernians were Fenians and that the Irish were sharpening their pikes. Consequently, they were responsible for the panic.³⁰ The Irish Canadian also denounced the publication of scandalous reports against the Catholics'

29. "The Outrage on Orange Lodge No. 4", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 23, December 8, 1864, p. 2, col. 6.

30. "Sensational", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 50, December 21, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-3.

loyalty when there was no proof and the only excuse for slandering the Catholics was the axiom that where there was smoke, there was fire.³¹

The Canadian Freeman, labelling the report that Fenianism existed in Toronto a myth, maintained that those responsible for perpetrating the false impressions were fully aware of this but were using it to excite the Catholics and Protestants and to incite one against the other.³² The editor condemned the Leader for arousing sectarian passions and for degenerating from its usual high quality of reporting to fostering Orange prejudices.

A journal of its standing and respectability should have hesitated long before disgracing its columns by pandering to the prejudices and bad passions of Orangeism, at the expense of fair play and justice.³³

The editor accused the weekly Leader, which had a wide circulation among Catholics, of making no mention of Fenians or Hibernians while its other publication, the Patriot, with a predominantly Protestant and Orange circulation, referred to them.³⁴

31. "The Globe and Mr. Macdonell", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 47, November 30, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-2.

32. "The Fenian Panic", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 24, December 15, 1864, p. 2, col. 1.

33. (No title), (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 21, November 24, 1864, p. 2, col. 3-5.

34. (No title), (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VII, No. 24, December 15, 1864, p. 2, col. 4.

Fears of a Fenian uprising in Canada West against the Protestants encouraged the Orangemen of the Province to increase their efforts in defence of Protestantism and in surveillance of Catholic activities. The Grand Master of the Orange Lodges of British North America, John Hillyard Cameron, labelled the Hibernians, Fenians,³⁵ and Ogle R. Gowan, a Past Grand Master, advised all the brethern to join an established Militia unit or arm themselves privately in preparation for the impending Fenian raid.³⁶ This call by a leading Orangeman for the use of arms created a great stir of uneasiness among the Catholics of the city. The urging of the Orange to arm naturally constituted a challenge to the Irish Catholics to do likewise.

The Irish Canadian attacked and denounced Gowan for urging the Orangemen to prepare.³⁷ Such a call to arms was only an appeal to his fellow Orangemen to shoot in cold blood innocent Irish Catholics exercising their right to worship according to their consciences. The former Grand Master was only interested in creating trouble for the Catholics and where the Orangemen pre-dominated in

35. "The Orange Grand Master", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. II, No. 49, December 14, 1864, p. 4, col. 1-4.

36. "To the Members of the Loyal Orange Association" letter to the Orange Brethern from Ogle R. Gowan, Nebo Lodge Toronto, November 1, 1865, The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 42, November 8, 1865, p. 5, col. 2.

37. "Mr. Ogle R. Gowan's 'Address'", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 42, November 8, 1865, p. 4, col. 2-3.

Canada there was sure to be trouble. On previous occasions the city had seen how these "loud-mouthed loyalists and rabid ruffians" had caused bloodshed when excited by inflammatory addresses such as Gowan's. If Gowan's counsels prevailed then the Catholics would also be forced to arm to preserve themselves from assassination. There was not one Catholic Militia officer in all the city and many of the volunteer companies were actually standing armies of Protestant Orangemen.³⁸ Therefore Catholic security from the Orangemen's wicked designs in arming themselves could be attained only by thorough preparation and not by reliance on government assurances that there was no intention of arming the Orangemen.

The Canadian Freeman pointed to Gowan's letter as an example of the fact that one of the mischevious effects of Fenianism was to stir up Orangeism.³⁹ It protested against Gowan's advice and warned that if the Government were to follow it then Fenianism would receive an impetus in Canada which would prove very hard to check. While the editor agreed that the Orangemen be allowed to join the Militia and to arm for self-protection, he also demanded that there be no distinction in their favor over the Catholic element of the population who were equally loyal.

38. "The St. Patrick's Society of Montreal", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 44, November 22, 1865, p. 4, col. 3-4.

39. "Rampant Loyalty", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 19, Thursday, November 9, 1865, p. 2, col. 4.

Denunciation of Gowan's action came not only from the Irish Catholic Press. The Council of the Grand Orange Lodge of the Loyal Orange Association of Canada East unanimously passed a resolution denouncing Gowan's action and expressing profound regret at his call to arms.⁴⁰ The Lower Canada Press, as well as all of the Upper Canada Press, including papers conducted by Orangemen (except for the Toronto Watchman and Leader), opposed Gowan's action and denounced the recourse to arms.⁴¹

Thus the issue had gone full circle; from the Catholics arming in defence against threatened Orange aggression to the Irish Catholic Press urging the Catholics to be prepared for Orange retaliation. Yet the issue did not result in a violent clash between the two factions in Toronto. Distrust of the Catholic community in general lessened and gradually Protestant, as well as Catholic, suspicion centered more and more on the Hibernian Benevolent Society as the focal point of Fenian sentiment in Toronto.

Nevertheless when the Hibernians marched in defence of their beliefs and institutions and consequently gained the wrath of the Protestant community and a reputation as

40. "Mr. O.R. Gowan and the Grand Orange Lodge of Lower Canada", The Leader, Vol. 13, No. 3863, Friday, November 10, 1865, p. 2, col. 6.

41. (No title), (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXII, No. 268, Thursday, November 9, 1965, p. 2, col. 4.

Fenians, the two Irish Catholic papers united in defence of their co-religionists and their need to protect themselves against Orange aggression. Revival of the traditional quarrel between the Irish Catholics and the Orangemen rallied the Irish Catholic Press to the defence of their fellow Catholics and assured their support against the traditional enemy - Orangeism. They were equally united in their assurance to the Globe and the Protestant community that the Irish Catholics of Toronto were loyal and that the Hibernian demonstrators were not Fenians.

Despite the fact that the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman were deeply opposed on the issue of Fenianism and the value of the Brotherhood in Ireland and in the United States, the two Irish Catholic papers exhibited a strong united front in the face of Orange and Protestant attacks on Irish Catholic loyalty. Their division of opinion was a private matter, of concern only to the Irish Catholics themselves. The family quarrel in the Irish Catholic community of Toronto and Canada West remained just that - a family issue. Even though the Irish Canadian criticized the Irish Catholic clergy for its opposition to Fenianism yet both the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman were Catholic papers and were consequently anti-Protestant and distinctly anti-Orange.

If, however, the Canadian Freeman was convinced in the fall of 1864 that Fenianism had not yet infiltrated

into Canada, time was to alter that opinion. By mid 1865 the Canadian Freeman had been persuaded that the Globe may have been right and it suspected that some of the Hibernians, including their president, Michael Murphy, were Fenians, if not in fact at least in sympathy and sentiment. Yet it was not the Hibernians' armed demonstration or fear of revolutionary insurrection which convinced the Canadian Freeman. Rather it was the marked degree of anti-clericalism which the Hibernians began to exhibit that finally persuaded the editor of their Fenian leanings.

PART II
CHAPTER II
FENIANISM IN TORONTO

Although the Canadian Freeman supported the Hibernians' action on November 5th., 1864, and defended them against the charge that they were Fenians, by the following summer, the paper was no longer as fully convinced of their true sentiments with regard to the Fenian movement. The editor became more and more suspicious of their true character as a result of their actions and the radical speeches of their President, Michael Murphy. The editor also found himself disagreeing on major issues with the Hibernian Benevolent Society's unofficial organ, the Irish Canadian, which had grown more outspoken on the issues of Irish Canadian nationalism and clerical domination.

At the same time, threats of a raid by the American Fenians increased and some Canadians, particularly the Protestants, feared that Irish Canadian Fenians might co-operate with such a plan. As a result Bishops Lynch and Farrell urged the Irish Canadians to act as loyal citizens and conscientious Catholics during the St. Patrick's Day celebrations of 1866. Suspicion of the Irish Canadians and the Hibernians continued, however, and appeared to prove warranted with the arrest of Murphy and five others for conspiracy. This resulted in renewed attacks on

Catholic loyalty, on the Hibernian Benevolent Society, and especially on the pro-Fenian Irish Canadian. When the Fenian raid did occur, both Irish papers opposed it, although the Irish Canadian sought to reduce the responsibility of the American Fenians for the death of Canadian Militia men by placing some responsibility on the British. The Canadian Freeman considered the raiders, outlaws, who were merely using Irish liberation as an excuse for marauding and called upon all Irish Catholics to rally to the defence of their country.

The Hibernian Benevolent Society of Toronto was an Irish Catholic nationalist society established in the late fifties after the breakup and dissolution of the St. Patrick Society.¹ The Society professed two aims. The first was benevolence to needy children and orphans and the second was protection for the Irish Catholic community against Orangeism and Protestantism. The formation of the new Irish Society in Toronto initially met with the goodwill

1. The St. Patrick's Society was an Irish-Canadian society composed of both Catholics and Protestants. It was dissolved in 1859 due to internal dissention and opposition. Moylan was President of the Society at the time. It is difficult to establish the exact date of the creation of the Hibernian Benevolent Society. Thomas Sheedy, Secretary of the society, stated that it had been organized in 1857, but Bishop Lynch remarked that it was 1856, while Moylan set the date at 1859.

of the Catholic community though in time this sentiment changed radically. The Canadian Freeman greeted the Society's purpose as a laudatory one but the editor remained cautious of the organization until it had proven itself.²

These years in which the Hibernian Benevolent Society grew to prominence in Toronto were the same years which saw Fenianism established in Ireland and the United States. Relations between the Irish Catholics and the Irish Protestants in Toronto appeared to be degenerating in the latter part of the decade as evidenced by the failure of the multi-denominational St. Patrick's Society and the growth in its stead of the more nationalist and Catholic Hibernian Benevolent Society. By 1862, the Hibernians had become even more nationalist and had fallen under the influence of the New York Irish nationalist Society, the Phoenix.³ With the demise of that Society's paper the nationalist element in the Hibernian Benevolent Society established its own journal in Toronto, the Irish Canadian, to promote Irish radical nationalist ideas in Upper Canada. In the meantime the Society's militant

2. "The Hibernian Benevolent Society of Canada", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 7, August 17, 1865, p. 2, col. 3-4.

3. Ibid., The Phoenix, a weekly Fenian paper, was begun by John O'Mahoney on June 3, 1859.

element was growing more outspoken in its expression of nationalist sentiment. At the St. Patrick's Day celebrations of 1863 the President of the Society, Michael Murphy, adopted a strong nationalist tone in his address favoring radical means to alleviate Ireland's suffering and promising Irish Canadian support for the cause. This obvious reference to force as the solution to Ireland's wrongs and its hint of Irish Canadian sympathy with Fenianism shocked the Protestant Press as well as many Irish Catholics.

Despite the expression of equally radical views the following year, the Canadian Freeman, probably considering the matter a "family" issue, staunchly defended the action of the Hibernians in November of that same year and assured the Protestant community of Canada West that the Hibernians were not Fenians. Nevertheless in his own mind the editor was probably far less convinced. It only required another year's time and another St. Patrick's Day celebrations before the editor found himself warning his fellow countrymen of the Fenian Brotherhood and its sympathizers in the Hibernian Benevolent Society.

The catalyst which precipitated the Canadian Freeman's denunciation of the Hibernian Benevolent Society proved to be the President's criticism of the Catholic Church and of Bishop John Farrell of Hamilton in particular. Bishop Farrell had continuously opposed the Hibernian Benevolent Society and refused to allow the organization in his diocese.⁴

4. "Insult to His Lordship Bishop Farrell", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 5, Thursday, August 3, 1865, p. 2, col. 4.

Not only did he decline to encourage and support it but on several occasions he even censured the Society and labelled it dangerous. On one occasion, during a Hibernian excursion to Hamilton, he had ordered the doors of the Cathedral barred against the Society's members.

The Hibernians had planned on a large group of Catholics from Hamilton and the surrounding area joining them for their annual Niagara Falls excursion in the fall of 1865. The Bishop, however, attempted to stop or reduce any participation among his flock. On the Sunday previous to the planned excursion, he advised the congregation from the pulpit not to take part in the Hibernian plans. The advice was generally accepted and only a few joined the Hibernians for the excursion.

On the return trip from Niagara the President of the Society, Michael Murphy, attacked Bishop Farrell for his stand on the Hibernian Benevolent Society. In thanking the men of Hamilton and Dundas who had attended, Murphy emphasized the difficulties and embarrassments they had suffered in joining the excursion.⁵ He stressed the great distance they had to travel and the threats from those in high ecclesiastical office which they had to disregard. Fortunately, unlike the Hamilton diocese, such clerical

5. "Excursion of the Hibernian Benevolent Society", The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 28, July 26, 1865, p. 4, col. 3-4.

interference in purely temporal matters did not happen in Toronto. Then in a rather threatening reference to Bishop Farrell he denounced those who had wronged Ireland's cause as traitors. He emphasized the gratitude which the Irish felt for their heroes and patriots but stressed the fate of those, past and present, who had deserted Ireland in her need. It was a characteristic of the Irish that they never forgot those who had wronged the homeland and deserted her cause. The speech ended with three cheers for the Bishop and clergy of Toronto.

In a Pastoral letter distributed throughout his diocese shortly after the affair, Bishop Farrell denounced these Irish Canadian nationalists in strong terms. He condemned what he labelled Fenianism or Hibernianism in Canada and ordered all priests to forbid any Fenian or Hibernian the sacraments and to treat them as "ipso facto" excommunicated.⁶ This was a very severe position and was the strongest stand yet adopted by the Irish Catholic clergy in Canada.⁷ In taking this view he was adopting the strong doctrinaire position of several of the Irish and American Bishops on Fenianism, a step which the more liberal Bishop Lynch of Toronto seemed to wish to postpone

6. "His Lordship the Bishop of Hamilton on Canadian Irish 'Nationalists'", quote from a pastoral letter by Bishop Farrell, The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 7, Thursday, August 17, 1865, p. 2, col. 3.

7. Earlier that year Archbishop Connolly of Halifax had stressed the Church's opposition to Fenianism and had denied that the Church in Canada encouraged the Fenians. Archbishop Connolly's letter was primarily in support of Confederation and his stand on the Fenians was not as strong as Bishop Farrell's.

or avoid. With Bishop Farrell taking such an extreme stand, however, Bishop Lynch was forced to express his opinion of the Hibernians and their increasingly nationalistic sentiments.

On Sunday, August 13th., a circular from the Right Reverend Bishop Lynch was read in the various Catholic churches of the city censuring the Hibernian Benevolent Society and the President for his action in Hamilton.⁸ He also addressed a letter to the Bishop of Hamilton apologizing for the conduct of the Hibernians during their recent excursion.⁹ While he could not be held responsible for the acts of his congregation yet he was very sorry that any of his flock should have disgraced themselves by listening to such false and derogatory language. Bishop Farrell had every right to refuse the establishment of the Hibernian Benevolent Society in his diocese and his foresight in warning against the establishment was well appreciated.

Bishop Lynch further remarked that though the Hibernian Benevolent Society had been established for a good purpose, lately it had caused trouble and annoyance to himself, the clergy and the laity by the sentiments

8. "Hibernian Benevolent Society of Canada", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 31, August 16, 1865, p. 4, col. 4.

9. "Bishop Lynch and the Hibernians", letter from Bishop Lynch to Bishop Farrell, Toronto, August 14, 1865, The Globe, Vol. XXII, No. 196, Thursday, August 17, 1865, p. 2, col. 7.

expressed publically by its President. Furthermore Murphy had continued in these expressions though the bishop had warned and entreated him and twice went so far as to repudiate certain acts and expressions of Murphy and several members of the Society. At that time Bishop Lynch had believed in acting with patience in order to correct what was reprehensible on account of the numerous good-hearted members of the organization. He now shared Bishop Farrell's opinion of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, however, and he believed that it was time to advise all good Catholics to quit the Society which had fallen away from Catholic principles and was now governed by imprudent men.

Despite the denunciations of the Hibernian Benevolent Society by both Bishop Farrell and Bishop Lynch, the Society's unofficial organ, the Irish Canadian contained only a short comment on the censure delivered from the pulpit. The editor agreed to the Bishop's right to question and criticize the acts of men in public capacities but believed the Bishop had overlooked the cause which had evoked the remarks.¹⁰

On the other hand, the Canadian Freeman greeted the Bishops' decision to condemn the Hibernian Benevolent

10. "Hibernian Benevolent Society of Canada", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, op. cit.

Society. The editor defended Bishop Farrell's assessment of the Hibernians and criticized their action in Hamilton. It was an indication of the Hibernians' character that the President of the Society could openly dictate to a Catholic Prelate and insult him in his own diocese.¹¹ Murphy's anti-clerical and disrespectful address clearly vindicated Bishop Farrell's decision to discourage Fenianism in his diocese. The applause of the Catholics in response to Murphy's statement also indicated the character of the Hibernians' religious belief and revealed their true sympathies. Any Society whose President could use such language against a venerable and widely-esteemed Bishop like Bishop Farrell deserved no recognition from Catholic laymen, let alone the Hierarchy.

Stressing the anti-Catholic character of Murphy's argument, the editor of the Canadian Freeman accused the President of being a Protestant and a demagogue and compared him to Lucifer and Luther for his criticism of the Catholic Church.¹² The authority and unity of the Catholic Church were her distinguishing features and anyone who defied her authority or attempted to destroy her unity could not be called a Catholic. Murphy exhibited a

11. "Insult to His Lordship Bishop Farrell", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, op. cit.

12. (No Title), (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 6, August 10, 1865, p. 2, col. 4.

a particularly Protestant view in his argument that Bishop Farrell, in criticizing the Hibernian Benevolent Society, was interfering in a purely temporal affair for both the temporal and spiritual powers of the Church were sacred. For centuries Infidels, Princes and Revolutionaries had tried to destroy the Church's temporal authority but had failed. In adopting such an attitude Murphy placed himself in a position and a tradition directly opposed to the Catholic Church. A Bishop had every right to advise and warn his flock of dangerous organizations and only the ignorant were impertinent enough to claim the right to determine what was spiritual and what temporal. Murphy's tactics of thus addressing an excited crowd on imaginary wrongs was characteristic of demagogues and Irish Catholics should take care least they loose their faith, character and religion in following such anti-Catholic ideas.

In reply to Bishop Lynch's denunciation, the members of the Hibernian Benevolent Society unanimously passed a resolution in which they openly upheld their actions and claimed to be unaware of having done anything to alter the good opinion which his Lordship entertained towards them when they were established.¹³ They had never presented themselves to the public as a solely religious

13. "Hibernian-Benevolent Society", The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 32, August 23, 1865, p. 4, col. 4.

organization and hence, though always willing to agree to any of his wishes, they disclaimed his Lordship's assumed authority over them and interference in their freedom of action. As a protective and quasi-political organization their liberty and rights were not to be considered within the sphere of influence of Church authorities. In accord with this view they resolved that they had great confidence in their President and that, though they did not intend to insult a Catholic dignitary, they agreed fully with the President's remarks and considered them truthful and applicable in view of the denunciations of the Society made by the Bishop of Hamilton.

The Hibernians' disregard for the Bishop's criticism convinced Moylan of their Fenian leanings and anti-Catholic sympathies. Though the editor admitted that there were many good and well-meaning members of the Society, they were under the leadership of questionable men.¹⁴ Since they were moral cowards afraid of leaving the organization, then they had to accept the consequences. So long as the members were willing to allow their President to represent them as "seditious, treasonable, and anti-Catholic, to all intents and purposes, in feeling and sentiment, without any public disclaimer or remonstrance" then they deserved to be severely criticized and considered Fenian sympathizers.

14. "The Hibernian Benevolent Society of Canada", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 7, Thursday, August 17, 1865, p. 2, col. 3-4.

When they sought to introduce Carbonari views into a peaceful and free country where there was religious liberty and when they assumed a position harmful to others they should expect unfavorable comments. Since they condoned by silence their President's act of insulting a Bishop in a manner too gross even for an Orangeman and showed themselves to be followers of Garibaldi rather than the Pope then a Catholic journalist could not remain silent or speak of them in tender words. Until the Hibernians offered some evidence for a contrary opinion he would call them sham patriots and anarchists who were a nuisance to the country and who would be treated as enemies of religion and of Canada so long as they preached sedition in a well-governed country. He noted with pleasure their denunciation of any connection with Fenianism but wished they would follow it more faithfully in practice. He called on them to be either Fenian or Canadian openly and above board. "Take off the mask and let us know where you are to be found."

Thus the editor of the Canadian Freeman began a campaign against Fenianism and Hibernianism in late summer of 1865 with the intention of restricting its growth and influence among the Irish population of Upper Canada. He was convinced that in attacking Fenianism in Canada he was serving the best interests of his religion and co-religionists

for the movement was opposed to their well-being.¹⁵ Nevertheless Fenianism and its aims were quite appealing to many Irishmen who would have liked to see Ireland free. Consequently by opposing a nationalist society such as the Fenian Brotherhood, the editor found himself in opposition to a large number of men, who, up until that time, had been among his warmest friends and supporters. However, he said nothing would cause him to adopt any course other than that befitting a Catholic journalist. Any attempt to avoid exposing Fenianism's evil tendencies or to stop trying to divert the minds of the Irish Catholics to more useful matters, merely because of the chance of personal loss, would be avoiding one's duty. Since the Brotherhood advocated violent rebellion and favored the principles of the Italian and French revolutionaries, the Canadian Freeman considered it the duty of a responsible Catholic journalist to oppose the Brotherhood at all times and expose its evil tendencies whenever possible. In so doing he was following the teachings of the Pope and the practice of many of the Irish and American bishops who had already denounced the Fenians in Ireland and the United States.

Addressing the farmers of the Province, the editor warned them of the real nature of the Hibernian Benevolent

15. "Fenianism", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 6, Thursday, August 10, 1865, p. 2, col. 2-3.

Society and revealed the Fenians' attempt to smuggle their organization into Adjala under the guise of a local protest meeting.¹⁶ The Irish Catholics of the area, who were among the foremost in western Canada, would not have made themselves the pawns of such scheming men had they known the motives prompting the affair. These same Fenians had done much to hurt the Irish Catholics of Toronto already and before associating with them the Catholic farmers would do well to ask themselves what good Fenianism had done for Ireland at home or abroad. Rather than benefiting Ireland the Brotherhood had only succeeded in causing strife and discord, in robbing Irish servant girls and in selling thousands of young Irishmen to their deaths in Northern Armies. The sole aim of the Fenians was to dupe as many people as they could in hopes of making money out of the affair. Taking their example from O'Mahoney and the American Fenians, the Canadian Fenians wished to cash in on their fellow countrymen's credulity and patriotism and rob them of their savings. In supporting the Fenian Brotherhood in Canada, the Irish Catholic farmers would be assisting an organization opposed to ecclesiastical authority and intent on undermining Catholics' respect for their clergy. By joining the Fenians they would invite

16. "Fenianism, A Word of Warning", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 5, Thursday, August 3, 1865, p. 2, col. 3-4.

Protestant reaction and consequently encourage in the New World the racial and religious conflict which plagued Ireland. They would become:

...instrumental in lighting a torch which is destined to spread the flame of enmity and strife throughout the length and breadth of the land, to turn good neighbors into bad enemies, to draw deep and broad the line of separation that must obliterate all sympathy and community of feeling between Protestants and Catholics in Western Canada.

If the Irish Canadian made little response to the Bishops' comments, the editor took a much stronger stand in reply to the attacks of the Canadian Freeman. It denied that there was any Fenian organization in Canada though it admitted sympathy with its aims.¹⁷ As for the spread of the Brotherhood under the auspices of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, there had been no attempt to smuggle Fenianism into Adjala and the countryside. The Canadian Freeman had merely invented that story to appear a saviour and to prove its valor by revealing the supposed plot. This was only further evidence that Moylan was a hypocrite; unfit to be a Catholic as well as an Irishman, who only pretended reverence for religion. As to Moylan's questioning of the value of Fenianism and the benefit it had brought to Ireland, the editor replied that it was the "germ, the hope, the means of a future harvest, that shall give life, strength and health for the coming time."

17. "Yet Another Warning", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 30, August 9, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-3.

In thus denying the existence of Fenianism in Canada West, the editor of the Irish Canadian did not disavow any sympathy with the movement. Indeed while he maintained that the Hibernians were not Fenians, he admitted that they supported the aims and views of the Brotherhood. Yet despite this sympathy for Fenianism among the Hibernians they were not treasonable or seditious and certainly not anti-Catholic.¹⁸ Murphy's speeches favoring stronger measures in Ireland though they may have lacked polish and elegance, certainly were honest and clear, even if they were not popular in Toronto. Although his speeches aroused the hostility of the anti-Irish, anti-Catholic element, this was no wonder for all new social and political reforms created dispute and disagreement. His views on Irish liberation were the only ones offering any promise of success. While it was true that there were still many, both lay and clerical, who disagreed with these views, they did so not because they did not believe in them but because they preferred to remain a while longer in peace rather than openly express their true belief and thereby risk defeat and increased oppression. This was the view of the majority of the Hierarchy and clergy of Ireland. If so, how could it be a crime for their lay countrymen to believe otherwise, as Murphy did?

18. "A Rare Biographer" (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. III, No. 32, August 23, 1865, p. 4, col. 1-3.

The suspicion that Fenianism existed among the Irish Catholic population of Toronto and the Irish Canadian's admission of Fenian sympathy among members of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, as well as within its own ranks, increased concern over the extent of this sentiment within the Canada West Irish Catholic community. The question of Fenian sympathy at home became of greater concern because of the continued threats by Irish American Fenians of a raid on Canada. Many Protestants feared that if a raid took place the attacking Fenians would receive assistance from sympathetic Irish-Canadian Fenians in Toronto. This fear was further heightened by the threats from the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States which became more frequent and pronounced in the spring of 1866. Certain Canadian citizens and newspapers became alarmed by these growing threats of attack. They began to believe that there was a distinct danger and that some defence measures should be adopted. The Canadian Government seemed to confirm this view when it ordered the Militia to the Frontier as a precautionary measure.

Rumor had it that a Fenian Raid would probably occur on March 17th., St. Patrick's Day, 1866, in conjunction with an Irish disturbance in Toronto and other Canada West towns during the St. Patrick's Day processions.¹⁹ Consequently

19. "St. Patrick's Day", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXIII, No. 59, Friday, March 9, 1866, p. 2, col. 2.

the government called out 10,000 more Volunteers as support for those already on the Frontier. The reported plan was that American Fenians from Detroit, Ogdensburg, Buffalo and other American cities would arrive in Toronto unsuspectingly and join the Irish processions to be held in the streets of Canadian cities and towns on St. Patrick's Day. Their aim in so doing was to disturb the peace and distract the authorities at the time that their fellow Fenians were raiding the border.

This rumored plan disturbed many of the Protestants of Toronto who suspected and feared Irish Canadian co-operation with the American Fenian scheme. Consequently the Irish Catholics of Toronto were urged and requested to assure their fellow citizens of their peaceful intentions. The Protestants appealed to the Irish Canadians' patriotism and requested that they forgo their right to a procession in order to preserve the peace and relieve the mounting tension. The Protestants maintained that since the Irish Catholics of Canada had no basis for complaint of prejudicial or discriminatory treatment, then they had no reason to welcome a Fenian invasion and consequently should be willing to forfeit their right to a national procession in order to maintain the peace. A leading Toronto Protestant daily assured the Protestant community that if such a Fenian plot existed it would not succeed for the "respectable, order-loving portion of our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens"

would use their influence to prevent any Irish processions being held in any Canadian city or town that year.²⁰

Protestant suspicion of Irish Canadian co-operation in a Fenian attack naturally centered around the Hibernian Benevolent Society since it was believed to be pro-Fenian and because the national festivities were of concern to it as one of the major Irish Catholic Societies. The Hibernian Benevolent Society's reaction to the Protestants' suggestion that the Irish forgo any demonstration was expressed by Michael Murphy who pleaded ignorance of any cause for apprehension and assured the people that the Hibernian Benevolent Society was unaware of any anticipated trouble.²¹ The Hibernians, at the suggestion of Bishop Lynch, had agreed to forgo their demonstration the previous year but the Orangemen were never requested to adopt a similar action on their commemorative day, the 12th. of July. There was not a shadow of a reason for the Irish Catholics to be deprived of their rights and the Society had every intention of exercising its guaranteed privileges and demonstrating.

In a similar response to the Protestants' concern

20. Ibid.

21. "St. Patrick's Day", Letter to editor of Globe from Michael Murphy, Toronto, March 12, 1866, The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 8, March 14, 1866, p. 5, col. 1-2.

over the St. Patrick's Procession, the Irish Canadian supported the Hibernian Benevolent Society and defended the Catholics' right to demonstrate. The editor suggested that the real reason for the excitement raised by the city's Daily Press was not fear of any trouble so much as an attempt to destroy the love which the Irish still had for their homeland.²² This effort to prevent the usual celebration of the Irish Catholic National Day was just a means to this end. The Irish Catholics had every right to demonstrate and if they were interfered with then the consequences would rest with the administration of justice and not with the Hibernians.

These uncompromising stands taken by the Nationalist Hibernian Benevolent Society and its unofficial organ, the Irish Canadian, did little to reassure the Protestants. Some solace for Protestant anxiety came from the Catholic Church, however. In response to the mounting tension Bishop Lynch attempted to dispel Protestant fears of Irish Catholic insurrection and to restrain Irish Catholic enthusiasm and sympathy with Fenianism. In a Pastoral letter to the clergy of his diocese he urged the members of the Catholic community to act as pious Catholics and loyal Irishmen on March 17th.²³ Referring to the American

22. Ibid.

23. "St. Patrick's Day Address From Bishop Lynch", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXIII, No. 60, Saturday, March 10, 1866, p. 2, col. 2-3.

Fenians, he deplored the excitement caused by the "lawless men" who intended to make war on a peaceful country with the aim of liberating Ireland. Under such circumstances the duty of all loyal Catholics would be to repel the invasion and defend their homes for loyalty was both a virtue and a duty. The clergy were requested to urge their flock to celebrate St. Patrick's Day by praying that God would inspire the rulers of Ireland to extend justice and mercy to the country and that He would change the views of the "misguided men" who "pretend" to improve Ireland's lot by anarchy and bloodshed.

In a similar attempt to discourage any sympathy for Fenianism among the Irish Catholics of Canada, Bishop Farrell of Hamilton once again condemned the Fenian Brotherhood and pointed out that the Fenians had been cast off by the Church and were not Catholics.²⁴ No good Catholic could support a treasonable association like the Brotherhood. Furthermore Ireland's wrongs could never be corrected by such an illegal, unlawful and unholy society as Fenianism. He also emphasized the duties of citizens and noted that every man was bound to fight for his country.

24. "His Lordship Bishop Farrell on Fenianism", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 37, Thursday, March 15, 1866, p. 2, col. 7.

The Canadian Freeman strongly supported Bishop Lynch's remarks as having treated well and in an exhaustive manner the difficult question of Irish Canadian loyalty and Irish nationalism.²⁵ The Bishop had clearly demonstrated that an Irish Canadian could love Ireland and grieve for her wrongs while still fulfilling the duties of a good and loyal Canadian citizen. He clearly showed that the liberation of Ireland could be attained without introducing race and religious war to Canada. While the Bishop revealed his love for Ireland, at the same time, he clearly demonstrated no sympathy for men who intended to injure Canada in the name of Ireland. The difficulty facing the Bishop and all loyal Catholics was their divided loyalty between sorrow over Ireland's injustices and the loyalty owed by Canadians to the British Crown. Apart from this there was also the added conflict between sympathy for Irish nationalist movements and respect for the Church's denunciation of the Republican Fenian Brotherhood. Bishop Lynch succeeded in reconciling these divergent sentiments and proved that a Canadian Irish Catholic could favor reform in Ireland without resorting to association with the anti-Catholic and revolutionary Fenians.

25.. "Important Letter From His Lordship Bishop Lynch on the Threatened Invasion of Canada and the Due Celebration of St. Patrick's Day", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 37, Thursday, March 15, 1866, p. 2, col. 4.

Although the Canadian Freeman opposed the encouragement of Fenian ideas and sympathies in Canada it nevertheless supported the Irish Catholic community's right to have a national procession. Furthermore it did not sympathize with the Protestants' argument that the Bishop should have requested that the procession be cancelled. The previous year the Hibernians had relinquished their right to a procession at the Bishop's request in order to give good example and develop more harmonious relations with the Protestant portion of the city's society. The Orangemen, however, refused to reciprocate and this year the Hibernians intended to exercise their right to demonstrate. The Bishop could not compel them to abandon this right. If the Hibernian Benevolent Society was of a disloyal character, and if the authorities considered it such, it was up to them to prevent a public demonstration if they feared for public order and not up to the clergy.

With the approach of St. Patrick's Day and the mounting tension over the threats of a Fenian Raid many expressions of Catholic loyalty were made. Bishop Lynch's and Bishop Farrell's comments were followed by a resolution from the members of the St. Patrick Society of Kingston expressing their willingness to fight for Canada to repel the Fenians in the event of an invasion.²⁶ They maintained

26. "St. Patrick's Society in Kingston, Special to the Globe", The Globe, Vol. XXIII, No. 63, Wednesday, March 14, 1866, p. 2, col. 4.

that the Irish were as prepared as always to defend the civil and religious rights which they enjoyed in Canada.

The recently re-organized, multi-denominational St. Patrick Society of Toronto, in a position reflective of its more moderate and less nationalist character than that of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, agreed to restrain its Irish festivities on March 17 and stressed the loyalty of the Irish in Canada to the British Crown. In response to the Fenian threat it passed a resolution opposing any attempt by the American Fenians to invade Canada.²⁷ In view of the circumstances of the time and the state of the public mind the members voted to refrain from any public demonstration on St. Patrick's Day. A past President of the Society and the editor of the Canadian Freeman, George Moylan, supported the motion and made use of the occasion to assure the members that the Irish Catholics had been wrongly accused of sympathizing with Fenianism. There were perhaps a few Catholics who supported the movement but the vast majority were loyal citizens as was only natural considering the government, the civil and religious liberty and the laws they enjoyed in Canada. He guaranteed the allegiance of the Irish Catholics and in case of necessity their blood and muscle in defending their soil and repelling those intent on capturing Canada and subverting her institutions.

27. "St. Patrick's Society, Annual Meeting", (from Globe and Leader), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 38, March 22, 1866, p. 1, col. 3-5.

In response to these declarations the Irish Canadian remarked that Irish Catholic loyalty was receiving a great deal of attention particularly from the Canada West Press.²⁸ Indeed the prominence which each paper gave these expressions seemed to indicate that Irish Catholic loyalty had been doubtful. The editor considered the passing of resolutions affirming Irish Catholic loyalty to be absurd and contemptable. The St. Patrick Societies of Kingston and Toronto should be severely criticized for presuming to speak for the Catholic population of Canada. The men who had passed the resolutions were not representatives of the true sentiments of the Irish Catholic population but were British Government agents carrying out orders. They had no authority to speak for the people. In taking this view the Irish Canadian never directly stated that the Irish Catholics were not loyal but implied that those who expressed these sentiments did not represent their views. Not willing to deny the loyalty of the Irish Catholics, the editor adopted this method of undermining the resolutions and the denunciations of the Fenian Brotherhood. The Irish Canadian did not say the Irish Catholic Canadians supported Fenianism but it did not say they were loyal either and it appeared to question the latter.

28. "Catholic Loyalty Again", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 10, March 28, 1866, p. 4, col. 4-5.

Despite pressure to the contrary the Hibernians persisted in their determination to hold a procession causing much anxiety even among the Irish Catholics themselves; for a slight cause could result in serious consequences, even riot or death.²⁹ On the morning of the 17th. the Hibernians, some 618 strong, marched through the city without serious incident. The Volunteers, who had been called out to preserve the peace, were stationed in the drill shed where they could cause no trouble. As one Protestant daily remarked with relief, the day passed pleasantly throughout the Province.³⁰

If the Irish Catholic National Day was without Fenian disturbances it certainly was not without its nationalist speeches. During the addresses of the day, Michael Murphy referred to the troubles in Ireland and commented on the reaction of the Irish in Canada to these events. In an apparent attempt to discourage sympathy with the Fenian plan of attacking Canada he remarked that the Irish Canadians should feel satisfied with the laws which governed them. Instead of the usual nationalist attack on British Rule in Ireland and support for radical means of alleviating the homeland's wrongs Murphy toned

29. "The Procession of the 17th", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 37, March 15, 1866, p. 2, col. 5.

30. "St. Patrick's Day, Toronto, Chatham, Ingersoll, Brantford, Dundas, Goderich, Seaforth, etc.", The Globe, Vol. XXIII, No. 67, Monday, March 19, 1866, p. 2, col. 6-7.

down his remarks and attempted to allay Protestant suspicion of Irish Catholics by assuring his audience that neither he nor the Irish Canadians had any sympathy with those who intended to make war on Canada.³¹

This reassurance for the Protestant community was matched by an equal optimism on the part of both Irish Catholic papers. The editor of the Irish Canadian assured the Protestant element of Toronto that the Catholics maintained an attitude of good will and respect towards them and he reiterated his belief that Roberts' threats with regard to Canada were mere wind.³² The March 17th. Fenian Scare had no basis in fact for there was no danger of an American Fenian Raid or Irish Canadian co-operation with such a venture. The Scare was the work of the Orangemen who made use of the Fenian threats to cast suspicion on the loyalty of the Canadian Irish Catholics and discredit them. They found in the Protestants' fear of a raid the occasion and opportunity to suppress the Catholics' right to demonstrate on their National Day. They spread false rumors of threatened Catholic attacks on Protestants in order to create strife and turmoil and to pit one class against the other.

31. "St. Patrick's Day in Toronto....", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 9, March 21, 1866, p. 4, col. 1-5, p. 5. col. 1. This would seem to indicate that the Canadian Fenians supported the O'Mahoney faction and not the Roberts' wing of the American Brotherhood.

32. Ibid.

With similar conviction the Canadian Freeman dismissed the Fenian threat and assured its readers that Fenianism was merely a means of robbing Irish patriots.³³ The Fenian leaders were interested in keeping the swindle profitable but they were not willing to go so far as attacking Canada to perpetuate it.

Regardless of these attempts by the Irish Catholic community to reassure the Protestant element of Canada West and relieve the tension which had mounted prior to St. Patrick's Day, the Fenian threat did not disappear immediately with the peaceful passing of March 17th. Although Protestant fears and suspicions of Irish Catholics were eased, the threat of an Irish American invasion remained. An indication of the continued concern over Irish American intentions was the government's decision to maintain the Volunteers on Active Service and the persistent demand for personal firearms. There were also rumors of a plan by the O'Mahoney faction to capture Campo Bello Island in Passamaquoddy Bay and Bermuda but this intended raid on New Brunswick ended in total failure.

The really significant issue in Canada West at this time was not the intended invasion of New Brunswick but

33. "St. Patrick's Day and the Invasion Fiasco", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 38, March 22, 1866, p. 2, col. 5.

the arrest of the President of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, Michael Murphy, and five others reportedly en route to join the O'Mahoney Fenians in the Campo Bello expedition. On April 10, 1866, a telegraph report reached Toronto that Michael Murphy and five companions had been arrested in Cornwall and removed from the Portland train. The next morning the police arrested Thomas Sheedy, Secretary of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, in Toronto and confiscated five revolvers, other weapons, money and the Society's records upon searching his house.³⁴

The arrest of Murphy renewed the whole question of Irish Catholic loyalty and the true character of the Hibernian Benevolent Society. Protestant suspicions, which had been somewhat abated, were once more revitalized. One of the Protestant daily papers immediately remarked, upon the first brief report, that there appeared to be good reason to believe that Murphy, whom the editor described as a zealous Fenian, was en route to aid the O'Mahoney faction in its expedition against New Brunswick.³⁵ The editor expressed the sentiments of a large number of Toronto Protestants when he remarked that the arrest was justified merely by the prisoner's previous treasonable statements.

34. "Arrest of a Fenian", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXIII, No. 87, Wednesday, April 11, 1866, p. 2, col. 7.

35. "Arrest of Michael Murphy", (Ed), The Globe, Vol. XXIII, No. 86, Tuesday, April 10, 1866, p. 2, col. 2.

The initial reaction of the Hibernian Benevolent Society's unofficial organ, the Irish Canadian, was denial of the grounds for arrest and imprisonment rather than defence of the President and the Society against renewed Protestant accusations of disloyalty and Fenianism. The editor criticized the Government for making the arrests without cause and for detaining the Hibernians illegally. The prisoners surely would be acquitted after examination for it was not an offence in Canada to carry arms.³⁶ They had made no attempt to conceal their trip or to resist arrest. No doubt they would shortly be released as the charges could not be proven.³⁷ The editor equally forcefully defended Thomas Sheedy and accused the authorities of having arrested and detained him illegally.³⁸ The prisoner had been detained for two days despite the lack of evidence and the failure to lay a charge against him. According to the Irish Canadian this illegal treatment of Sheedy aroused a good deal of interest in the city and was condemned by all classes as hasty and unwarranted. Such an infringement on civil rights was a serious example

36. "Arrest of Mr. Michael Murphy", The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 12, April 11, 1866, p. 5, col. 3.

37. "Arrest of Michael Murphy and Others", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 13, April 18, 1866, p. 4, col. 1-2.

38. "Arrest of Thomas Sheedy", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 13, April 18, 1866, p. 4, col. 4-5.

of the constant state of insecurity in which each citizen lived. Up until Sheedy's arrest it was believed that some information or reason for arrest was necessary before a man could be detained but now it appeared the Habeas Corpus Act was no guarantee of freedom from arbitrary imprisonment.

The editor's confidence that Murphy's case would soon be dismissed was not vindicated. Yet throughout the course of the hearing in Cornwall, the Irish Canadian maintained a critical attitude towards the injustice of the Government's case. The editor characterized the affair as the worst mockery of law and justice that he had ever encountered.³⁹ There was little hope that the prisoners would receive justice for the Mayor of Cornwall, Dr. Allen, had invited only his Orange confreres to judge the case and no Catholic judges had volunteered to sit for the proceedings. Furthermore the prisoners were being detained despite lack of evidence merely because of their religious beliefs. Even the people of Cornwall believed that the prisoners would be tried on account of the Magistrates' prejudices. Yet the judges were not alone in their unjust treatment of the case. The Government had

39. "The Cornwall Arrests", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 14, April 25, 1866, p. 4, col. 4-5.

been trying for months to obtain sufficient information to arrest Fenian sympathizers but the authorities had not been able to obtain evidence against them.⁴⁰ Now that the Government had these "political prisoners" it was using illegal and questionable methods to retain them in Cornwall.⁴¹

This valiant attempt by the Irish Canadian failed to enlist many supporters for Murphy's cause or to arouse much sympathy for his plight. In sharp contrast to the Irish Canadian, the Canadian Freeman failed to come to Murphy's defence. No doubt satisfied that the Government was justified in its action and convinced that further mention of the issue would benefit the Irish Catholic community little, the editor made few references to the Cornwall arrests. The paper noted the imprisonment of Murphy and his followers⁴² and reported the events of the case as it developed in Cornwall but other than that, however, made no comment on the affair.

40. On the Contrary Stacey in his article, "A Fenian Interlude--The Story of Michael Murphy", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. XV, No. 2, June, 1934, p. 133-154, suggests Sir John A. Macdonald was very upset over Cartier's action in arresting the Hibernians. The prisoners were later allowed to escape to the United States because the case against them could never be proven.

41. "The Political Prisoners", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 15, May 2, 1866, p. 4, col. 1-2.

42. "Arrest of Supposed Fenians", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 41, April 12, 1866, p. 2, col. 1.

With the arrest of Murphy, suspicion of the real nature of the Hibernian Benevolent Society seemed confirmed and attention was again focused on the character of the organization. After Murphy's arrest the Society's Rules and Constitution came under close scrutiny by citizens who had always been quite uneasy about the Society. The Constitution and By-Laws were published and copies were sold to all interested. The booklet revealed that the Society had collected arms and employed special signs and passwords. In the eyes of some it confirmed that the Society was organized for military purposes and that it was disloyal in character. Consequently those who had maintained this all along felt justified in believing that there really were Fenians in Canada prepared to aid their Irish American brethren should a raid occur.

In reply to this renewed attack on the Hibernian Benevolent Society the Irish Canadian defended the references in the Society's Rules to arms and efficiency as necessary in order to provide the Catholic body with the self-defence required against Orange vandalism.⁴³ Catholic security against Orange threats and attacks was due to the Hibernians, who were armed for personal protection only and who never denied being armed for this purpose.⁴⁴

43. "A Mare's Nest", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 13, April 18, 1866, p. 5, col. 2.

44. "Fenian on the Brain", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 16, May 9, 1866, p. 4, col. 4-5.

Orangeism, not Fenianism, was the reason for the arming of the Hibernians and the weapons had never been used for any purpose other than protection. There was no connection whatsoever between the merely local Hibernian Benevolent Society and the Fenian movement. One had the local aim of protection from Orangemen while the other struggled for the national liberation of Ireland.

This denial by the Irish Canadian that the Hibernian Benevolent Society was a Fenian organization seemed to be contradicted by the publication, a short time later, of a manifesto, allegedly from the District Center of the Fenian Brotherhood of Canada, denouncing the arrest and imprisonment of Murphy and retracting the previous statement of February 1, 1866 opposing a Fenian Raid on Canada.⁴⁵ Dated Toronto, April 14, 1866, it accused the Canadian Government of wantonly and treacherously arresting Irish Canadians in violation of their sacred and inalienable rights. The Fenian Brotherhood of Canada had opposed any attempt by the American Fenians to invade Canada because it believed that Canada should not suffer the horrors of war. Now, however, its position had changed. The many unfriendly actions of the Canadian Government towards the American Union during the Civil War and its involvement in the Lake Erie piracy, the St. Albans Raid and other

45. "Fenian Manifesto", from New York Daily News, April 19, The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 14, April 25, 1866, p. 5, col. 3.

plots revealed the Canadian Government's attitude of hatred towards the North. This Canadian sentiment was directly opposed to the warm feelings of friendship which all Irishmen had towards the American Republic which provided prosperity and freedom to Irish exiles. This attitude on the part of the Canadian Government and its outrageous and defiant action with regard to Murphy had forced the Canadian Fenians to alter their position with regard to the American Fenians' threatened raid. They now promised to avenge the insult to Murphy and the Irish Canadians whenever the Head Center in America decided to invade Canada. They pledged to remove from Canada with the aid of the French Canadians the last trace of British tyranny and to establish an independent state or to unite with the American Republic, that last hope of "freedom, Republicanism and Ireland".

The Irish Canadian carried the manifesto as an article but made no editorial comment on it. The Canadian Freeman did not make any reference at all to the Canadian Fenians' threat. This was probably because they sought to play the matter down rather than stir up partizan passions most of which were already sufficiently aroused.

The arrest of Murphy and the manifesto from the Canadian Fenians did nothing to ease tensions in Toronto or improve relations between the Irish Catholic and Protestant communities. Many people were becoming further

and further convinced that there were Fenian circles in Canada and that the Irish Canadian Fenians were prepared to aid their comrades from the United States should a raid occur. The Hibernian Benevolent Society no longer remained the sole object of criticism as the pro-Fenian Irish Canadian was singled out and forced to bear the brunt of numerous attacks by the Canadian Press. The paper had long been criticized by other Canadian papers, including recently the Canadian Freeman, for its expressed pro-Fenian sentiments. Now, however, it encountered even stronger accusations against its loyalty and extreme denunciations of its position. Various papers throughout Canada West criticized it. The Belleville Intelligencer and the Brantford Courrier maintained that the paper should be shut down for its treasonable statements.⁴⁶ The Hamilton Evening Times, in commenting on Murphy's hearing, stated that it would like to see the prisoners remain in jail a long time and that it was too bad that Patrick Boyle, the "editor" of the Irish Canadian, could not join them.⁴⁷

Over and above this criticism from Canadian newspapers, the Irish Canadian claimed to be the victim of a

46. "Arcades Ambo", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 12, April 11, 1866, p. 4, col. 2-3.

47. "Too Civil by Half", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 16, May 9, 1866, p. 4, col. 5, p. 5, col. 1.

Government sponsored campaign of intimidation aimed at destroying its financial support. Many, if not all, subscribers received notes in late April advising them to accept a friend's advice and return publically their copy of the seditious weekly as the authorities were maintaining a close observation of all supporters of Fenian organs.⁴⁸ The note was unsigned but dated Ottawa, April 16, 1866. The editor immediately accused the Government of secret persecutions against the paper in a cowardly and treacherous attack on the liberty and freedom of the Press. In addition to this note there had been numerous other instances of persecution at the hands of local postmasters who refused to deliver the paper to subscribers because they considered it seditious. The editor denied any charge that the paper was seditious or treasonable and maintained that he had never done anything that would make him liable to criminal charges.

Although fear of an American Fenian Raid with Irish Canadian co-operation continued, the danger of an attack diminished and was much less of an issue during May than it had been in the two previous months. Although Protestant suspicion of Irish Catholic loyalty remained it was somewhat relieved by the assurance that Murphy and the leading Fenians were imprisoned. American Fenian

48. "Foul Play", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 14, April 25, 1866, p. 4, col. 1-2.

threats had abated and the Government felt secure in dismissing the Volunteers from Frontier patrol. In general the situation returned to normal. There was also a corresponding reduction of Fenian activity in the United States. The O'Mahoney-Roberts struggle declined in importance after the O'Mahoney faction's expedition failed to capture Campo Bello Island. Roberts continued to make threatening speeches in border cities from Buffalo to Chicago but these had all been heard before and previous threats had never materialized. With the arrival of the Irish Head Center, Stephens, recently escaped from an Irish jail, the American Fenian situation changed. O'Mahoney resigned in his favor and Roberts contemplated doing the same though he did not. The danger of a Raid was further reduced by the fact that Stephens strongly opposed any attack on Canada and intended to concentrate the whole Fenian force on Ireland.

The Canadian Freeman felt confident in assuring its readers in early May that Fenianism was ended and that the people of British North America had nothing to fear from it. The editor recalled his original denunciation of Fenianism in April of 1864 and his prediction then that the movement would end in failure.⁴⁹ The recent developments in the O'Mahoney-Roberts struggle and the whole effect of

49. "Fenianism - A Retrospect", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 45, May 10, 1866, p. 2, col. 1-2.

the movement on Ireland and America now seemed to confirm his original prediction. There was no other possibility but failure for a movement which, though composed of Catholics, was censured by the Church and her clergy, denounced by the respectable Irish and distrusted by the National Press. No movement aimed at bettering Ireland's condition and redressing her grievances could succeed if the Hierarchy and the clergy, the National Press and the influential citizens of Ireland refused to support it. Lacking the confidence and sympathy of Irishmen it had no hope of success.

Nevertheless the editor of the Canadian Freeman regretted that so many of his countrymen had been deluded by the unprincipled leaders of the Fenians and had been swindled of their savings. The movement was merely a money-making scheme but the Irish had finally realized its true character. Now that they were aware of what a swindle Fenianism really was, he hoped that they had learned a lesson and that it would not be forgotten in the future.

Despite Moylan's assurances to the contrary, on June 1, 1866, the Fenians crossed the Niagara River and captured the small Canadian town of Fort Erie with little resistance. The next day the Fenians under Colonel John O'Neil defeated the Canadian Militia at Ridgeway. On the 3rd. the Canadian and British troops forced the Fenians to

to withdraw to American territory. When the raid came, however, no large number of Irish Canadians flocked to the support of the Fenians nor were there any demonstrations in their favor in any part of the Province.

The news of the attack came as a surprise to the Irish Catholic Press in Toronto because it had not only opposed the raid but even discounted it.

The Irish Canadian's first reaction was to reiterate, probably in self-defence, its remarks that it had seriously doubted the value of a Fenian attack on Canada as a means of winning Irish freedom.⁵⁰ While the editor obviously felt that he had to denounce the raid yet he remained true as possible to his pro-Fenian position. He had all along opposed the Roberts' plan of invading Canada while still supporting the Fenian aim of liberating Ireland. He still did not deny that sympathy. His quarrel was merely with Roberts' means not with the Fenians' aim.

At the same time he emphasized that if Canada had been independent of Great Britain the invasion would never have occurred, and Canadian Volunteers would not have been killed serving as advance guards to British Regulars. Perhaps this incident had been a "purification" sent to teach the Canadians self-reliance and independence

50. "Invasion of Canada", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 20, June 6, 1866, p. 4, col. 1-2.

of the Mother Country which had on numerous occasions warned them not to depend on her for military assistance.

He did not denounce the Fenians severely but rather attempted to shift the blame for the raid from the Fenians to the British and even to the Canadians. In his view, if Canada had severed its ties with Great Britain then the attack would never have occurred for the Fenians were really attacking Britain through Canada. This whole interpretation was questionable since the Fenians would probably have been satisfied with any base of operations. Still they could never have been considered belligerents against Great Britain unless they rebelled against part of the British Empire. Even in such a period of distress the editor could blame the British when the distress was actually caused by an Irish-American attack on Canada.

Though the Irish Canadian made no attempt to comment on Canadian Irish Catholic reaction to the raid, the editor criticized the anti-Catholic element of society and its reaction. This was at a time when even the daily Protestant papers were playing down the issue of Irish Catholic response to the raid. In reply to a comment that the Irish Catholics of the city were disloyal and not to be trusted, the editor remarked that such comments were unwise for they offended a large portion of the populace at a time of great distress and excitement.⁵¹ In condemning

51. "Native Malignity ", (Ed), The Irish Canadian, Vol. IV, No. 20, June 6, 1866, p. 4, col. 2.

this action he did not hesitate to describe it as characteristic of Orangeism. He blamed that organization for causing "untold misery" and suggested that only with its banishment from Canada would the people enjoy true peace and happiness. Thus, while other papers attempted to play down the sectarian views and passions of the city, the Irish Canadian indulged in another verbal attack on the Orange order.

The Canadian Freeman expressed a clearer and more forceful opposition to the Fenian "marauders".⁵² It considered them merely rowdys and lawbreakers posing as Irish patriots in an attempt to rally support for their outlaw raid with the cry of Irish liberation. Convinced as he had been that the Fenians did not seriously contemplate an invasion, the editor was shocked by reports of the attack. Obviously he had credited the Irish Americans with a greater sense of justice than they apparently deserved. The felling of disgust and indignation which spread throughout the province was equally shared by the Irish Catholics who were as prepared as the Protestants to carry out their duty of loyalty and allegiance to Canada. The Irish Catholics had offered no assistance or encouragement to the Fenians and indeed many had resisted the enemy both morally and physically. Nevertheless it

52. "Canada Outraged", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 49, June 7, 1866, p. 2, col. 1-2.

was of particularly vital importance that the Irish Catholics support the country and fulfill their duty for otherwise they would be open to contempt and disgrace in the eyes of the English Protestants.

Despite their allegiance and loyal disposition many Irish Catholics suffered from imputations on their loyalty as well as from insults, lies and even threats of violence.⁵³ The Canadian Freeman regretted that such tactics were encouraged by Orangemen who urged that many Irish Catholics, whom they considered rebels and Fenians, be driven from the country.⁵⁴ Over and above the impetus given this anti-Catholic sentiment by the raid itself, Moylan provided additional fuel by signing a petition urging suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.⁵⁵ He adopted this step because he firmly believed that there were Fenian sympathizers in Canada who should be restricted and also because he was probably equally convinced that it would be a clear indication of at least one Irish Catholic's loyalty. Yet the step won for him the disapproval

53. "Senseless Excitement", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 49, June 7, 1866, p. 2, col. 5.

54. "The Social Persecution of Orangeism", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 52, June 28, 1866, p. 2, col. 2-3.

55. "Suspension of the Habeas Corpus, The Duties and Responsibilities of Magistrates", (Ed), The Canadian Freeman, Vol. VIII, No. 50, June 14, 1866, p. 2, col. 3-5.

and criticism of the Irish Catholic community, several members of which felt compelled to flee to the United States to avoid persecution under the suspension of the act.

By the end of June the raid was no longer a newsworthy topic and by mid-August the issue was out of the Press. The strained emotions and heated passions which divided the Irish Catholics and the Protestants and which had been incited by the Raid were to last for a much longer time though.

The Protestant community's fear that there would be support and aid for the Fenians among the Irish Catholics of Toronto had never materialized. The Hibernian leaders were imprisoned in Cornwall though it was doubtful if many Irish Canadians would have rallied to the cause even if Murphy had been able to lead them. Fenianism in Toronto existed but there was not enough sympathy among the Irish Canadian community to enable the Canadian Fenians to assist the Roberts faction when it attacked. Canadian Fenianism was mainly a feeling of sympathy with the Brotherhood's aims and it never materialized into a threat. The unity which the Hibernians displayed was in opposition to Orangeism not British rule.

CONCLUSION

Fenianism as a movement and force in Irish-American history has been the subject of detailed study and examination. There have been a number of scholarly works on the influence of the Fenian Brotherhood on American society in the post-civil war years not the least of which is D'Arcy's The Fenian Movement in the United States, 1858-86. The military aspects of the Fenians and their threat to the security of the British North American colonies have also been put in perspective. The influence and effect of the Society on the Irish Community in Canada has largely been neglected, however. This study has attempted to examine that effect and determine to what extent Fenianism played a significant role in the Irish Catholic Canadian Community and how it influenced Irish Canadian thought in the sixties in Toronto.

A detailed research of the two Irish Catholic newspapers in Toronto in the early sixties revealed that Fenianism in general and, to a lesser degree, the Fenian threat in particular were current and pressing issues in the years 1863-66. The Brotherhood and its basic philosophy were contentious issues in the Irish Catholic Press and Community before they became a military threat to Canadian security. It was this aspect of Fenianism; the nature of

the movement, its aims and methods, rather than its external threat to the peace of British North America that made it an interesting topic to the Canadian Irish Catholic Community in Toronto.

The encouragement and impetus which the American counterpart of the Irish movement received from the Civil War strengthened the Brotherhood numerically and attracted large numbers of trained and capable former military personnel. This development coupled with mounting anti-British feeling in post-bellum America made the Fenian Brotherhood a potentially dangerous enemy of the scattered British colonies in North America. Yet it was not fear of a military attack or defeat that aroused the Canadian Irish Catholic Community's interest in Fenianism.

The Canadian Irish Catholics had become aware of the Brotherhood at its creation though it was not until 1863 that the movement really became an issue in Toronto. Reform movements were not new in Irish history but the development in the late fifties of the radical and revolutionary Fenian Brotherhood introduced a new and divisive element into Irish national politics. The Irish Community in Canada had grown significantly in the years following the famine and consequently maintained intense interest and close contact with the homeland. Any new reform movement was understandably received with interest and encouragement among the ex-patriots in Canada. Rather

than uniting the Irish Canadians in a greater awareness of the troubles of the homeland, the Fenian Brotherhood was a divisive force in Canada and in Ireland. The anti-clerical, revolutionary, radical and republican character of the Fenian Brotherhood placed it outside of the main stream of acceptable thought in a country like Ireland which was strongly Catholic, authoritarian and conservative. A large percentage of Irish patriots were Catholic in religion and had a deep attachment to Rome and the Papacy. Consequently the Brotherhood could rely upon little sympathy from a clergy and a people Catholic in character and ultramontane in outlook. Not only was the Brotherhood's radicalism alien to Irish religious beliefs but its republicanism was not reconcilable with Papal opposition to the revolutionary and republican movements throughout Europe.

The Catholic Church and consequently Irish Catholics opposed the Brotherhood not only because of its basic philosophy and nature but also because of its means. In direct opposition to Church teachings the Fenian Brotherhood favored the use of physical force if necessary in order to attain Ireland's independence. Irish reformers could support Daniel O'Connell's moral persuasion policy aimed at constitutional reform but they were less willing to sanction the use of physical force.

Yet the Fenian Brotherhood won sympathy and support among radicals and it was this resulting strength that caused the Canadian Irish Catholic Community to divide over Fenianism. Though the Canadian Irish Catholic Press showed some concern with the Brotherhood's activities in Ireland it was really the transfer of the Brotherhood's main activities to the United States in 1865 that awakened and aroused Irish Catholic interest in the movement and made it a threat to British North America. The Irish nationalist Press in Toronto, The Irish Canadian, hailed the Brotherhood's development while the Canadian Freeman felt compelled to denounce the movement for its anti-Catholic, revolutionary character and consequently warn the Irish Catholics of the dangers of the movement both to their religion and their national character.

Both Irish Catholic newspapers in Toronto therefore adopted a particular stand on the Brotherhood and its basic tenets. The nationalist Irish Canadian supported both the aims and the means of the Fenian Brotherhood whereas the Canadian Freeman, upholding the traditional Catholic position, opposed and denounced the movement as immoral and predicted it was doomed to failure. The basis of the disagreement between the two editors was the relationship between the Catholic Church and Fenianism. The Canadian Freeman rested its position on traditional Church opposition to revolutionary organizations. In its

attempt to rally support for the movement among the local Irish Catholic population, the Irish Canadian carried numerous letters from Catholics clerics supporting the Brotherhood or denouncing the Hierarchy's position on the society.

With the failure of the premature Fenian insurrection in Ireland in 1865 and the subsequent shift of Fenian activity to the United States, the movement became a closer and more significant issue in Canada West. The Irish Canadian greeted the broadening of the movement to America but the Canadian Freeman regretted its growth in the neighboring Republic. The split in the American Brotherhood further altered the nature and importance of Fenianism in relation to the Canadian Irish Catholic Community. The threat of a Fenian Raid now became apparent and consequently the Brotherhood took on a much more menacing and significant character in relation to British North America.

Despite the increasing opposition between the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman over the value of Fenianism and its development in Ireland and the United States, both papers were Irish Catholic and consequently united in defence of Irish Catholic rights particularly against Orange attack. When the Hibernians' armed march of November 5th., 1864, brought down upon the Hibernians

and the Irish Catholic Community the wrath and indignation of the Protestants and particularly the Orangemen, and resulted in accusations of Fenianism and imputations against the loyalty of the Irish Catholics, the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman stood united in their defence of their co-patriots' protective measures.

Yet, despite this display of Irish Catholic solidarity, the two papers were growing further apart on the issue of Fenianism. This became particularly apparent when Fenianism appeared to have infiltrated the Canadian Irish Catholic Community. The remarks and actions of the President of the Hibernian Benevolent Society convinced the Canadian Freeman that some members of the Society and the Irish Catholic Community were Fenian sympathizers. Consequently the editor took every action he deemed necessary to restrict and halt the movement's growth in Canada West. The Irish Canadian denied that Fenianism existed in British North America but admitted sympathy with the movement. Protestant fears of Irish Catholic compliancy with an American Fenian raid increased suspicion of Irish Catholic loyalty and resulted in several Fenian scares. Both Irish Catholic papers opposed a raid, however, and discounted the possibility that one would occur.

Through the Irish Catholic Press we readily see that Fenianism was indeed an issue in Toronto in the sixties.

In fact, the weekly Irish Catholic Press was far more concerned with the movement in general: its philosophy, its value for Ireland's cause, its prospects for success, its influence, effect and impression on Ireland's image, than it was with the threat of a raid. The important issues to both editors were the movement itself, its relation to Ireland's plight and Irish Catholic response to it. Of equal concern was the question of whether Irishmen and particularly loyal Irish Catholics could support the Fenian movement, whether it ought to be introduced into British North America where it might disrupt harmonious relations and particularly whether an Irish Canadian could support the movement against Great Britain without being traitorous. These were the pressing issues in the Irish Catholic Press.

At the same time the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman were aware of the threat of an attack on British North America but opposed it; the Irish Canadian because it would be diverting attention from the real aim of Fenianism, the Canadian Freeman because the movement harmed the Irish image and deluded hard-working Irish patriots. Both the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman discounted the danger of a raid and neither paid much attention to the attack when it came.

In Toronto the Fenian movement split the Irish population along religious lines and divided the Irish

Catholics over religious and nationalist issues. The Orangemen and Irish Protestants opposed Fenianism because it advocated an end to British rule in Ireland. The Irish Catholics, on the other hand, felt more oppressed than favored by British rule. In the Irish Catholic Community the ardent Catholics had to reconcile their sympathy for Ireland's ills and their respect for Catholic teaching. The anti-clerical and republican characteristics of the Brotherhood did not appeal to Catholics who likened Stephens and O'Mahoney to such revolutionaries as Garibaldi and Mazzini, long opposed and denounced by the Catholic Church. The Irishman in Toronto also found himself divided between his loyalty to Britain as a colonial and his treasonable views as a Fenian sympathizer. These various divergent aspects of the question perplexed the Irish Community of Toronto and taxed the editors of the Irish Catholic Press. In this way the Fenian movement was a significant influence on the Irish Catholic Community of Toronto in the sixties.

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ABSTRACT

The Fenian Brotherhood was established in Ireland and the United States in 1858 for the purpose of liberating Ireland from British rule by force if necessary. Fenianism as a movement and force in Irish American history and its threat to the national security of the British American colonies has been studied but the influence of the movement on the Irish Catholic community in Canada has been largely neglected. This thesis has attempted to determine the extent of that influence on the Irish Catholic community in Toronto in the years 1863-66.

There were two Irish Catholic weekly newspapers in Toronto, the Irish nationalist Irish Canadian, and the conservative, Catholic, Canadian Freeman. Fenianism as an Irish radical and revolutionary movement was of concern to the Irish Canadian and the Canadian Freeman not merely because of the threat of an American Fenian invasion of British North America but especially because of the nature and character of the Fenian Brotherhood and the continued interest of the Irish Catholics of Toronto in the affairs of the homeland. While the Irish Canadian greeted the movement as the only hope for Ireland's cause the Canadian Freeman condemned the Fenian Brotherhood for its anti-clericalism, its revolutionary character and its willingness

to resort to force in the struggle for Ireland's independence. Although the Irish Canadian supported the Fenian Brotherhood it was in agreement with the Canadian Freeman in opposing the Fenians' threatened invasion of Canada. The two papers were further united in their denial that Fenianism existed in Canada and their defence of the Hibernian Benevolent Society, an Irish Catholic nationalist organization, against charges that it was Fenian in character. In time, however, the anti-Catholic sentiments of the President of the Hibernian Benevolent Society and some of its members convinced the Canadian Freeman that Fenianism had indeed come to Toronto. Yet the Canadian Freeman was equally well convinced that the Irish Catholics as a body were loyal citizens of British North America.

Thus Fenianism did have an effect on the Irish Catholic community in Toronto not only because of the threat of a raid but moreso because as an Irish nationalist movement it drew the attention and interest of the Irish immigrants to Canada and because its radicalism was in conflict with Catholicism, one of the main influences in the lives of the Irish Catholic community in Toronto.