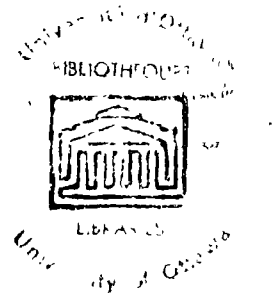


AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES
OF THE BASILIAN FATHERS IN TORONTO, 1850-1860

by

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Thesis presented to the Faculty
of Arts of the University of
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of History as partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Francis J. Boland, C.S.B., was born in Toronto, Ontario on June 30, 1916. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1938 at the University of Toronto and was ordained to the priesthood on August 15, 1942. He received degree of Master of Arts at the University of Detroit in 1948. The thesis presented to the History Department of the University of Detroit as a partial requirement for the degree of Master of Arts was entitled: The Attitude of the American Hierachy Towards the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility at the Vatican Council, 1870.

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the problems, the difficulties and the work of the Congregation of St. Basil in Toronto during the decade 1850-1860. As a certain amount of confusion would result from the exclusive use of either a chronological or a logical treatment of the matter, it was deemed advisable to effect a compromise based on the dictates of individual circumstances. Some problems, such as the curricula or those connected with the extension of Basilian activities, lent themselves more to a chronological consideration, whereas the problems associated with location seemed unsuited to this type of analysis.

The correspondence between the Toronto Basilians and the Superior General, as well as the majority of Bishop Charbonnel's letters, are in French. These were transcribed and translated into English and all references in the thesis to these letters apply to the pages of the English translations.

In the following paragraphs there is given a brief account of the background of the Congregation as well as the political, social, religious and economic conditions of the Toronto of the 1850's in order to present the problems of the Basilian Fathers to the reader in a clearer perspective.

It was in the year 1798 that Bishop Charles D'AVIAU of Vienne sought refuge from the excesses of the French Revolution in the little hamlet of St. Symphorien de Mahun. Located in the mountains several miles north of Lyons, France, St. Symphorien afforded an excellent shelter as it could be only approached by one road.

It was not solely for personal safety that the Bishop of Vienne took up residence in his mountain retreat. During the Revolution persecution so many priests either lost their lives on the guillotine or perished in prison and exile that only a few were left. It was very evident that some means would have to be adopted to replace the deceased clergy and since it was impossible to open an organized seminary, the bishop sought St. Symphorien as a place to train such students as were courageous enough to risk the dangers. To direct this important and hazardous work Father Lapierre was appointed parish priest.

During the years 1798 and 1799 many students presented themselves for instruction and when the pupils returned for the fall sessions of 1800, conditions had so improved that the classes were formed into an organized school. About forty students were enrolled, twelve living in the rectory, the others in the homes of the villagers. So great was the lack of educational facilities that this make-shift school in its out-of-the-way location had 140 students at the end of two years. By this time the violence

of the persecution had moderated and it was considered necessary in the interests of the school to move to Annonay, a nearby town of some importance.

From this time on the numbers of the staff lived under a rule drawn up by Father Picansel, parish priest of Annonay and Vicar General of the diocese of Viviers. As the first teachers grew older the formation of a religious community to continue the work of the education of young men for the priesthood was considered and agreed on. At the end of the Priests' retreat in 1822, Bishop de la Bruniere of Mende, who was also the Vicar General of the vacant diocese of Viviers, gave his consent to this request.

On the 21st of November 1822, ten priests knelt before the Vicar General and each pronounced the solemn promise which bound them to their priestly work and to one another in the Community of St. Basil. At their head was Father Lapierre celebrating his fortieth year in the priesthood. Slightly the junior of the superior was Father Duret, a fellow student of the Robespierre brothers at Paris. An early pupil of these older priests, Father Tourvieille, was most active in the formation of the new community and later became second Superior General. There, too, was Father Polly who as the former mayor of St. Symphorien de Mahun had hidden the Superior from the soldiers of the French Revolution and who for the past twenty-two years had been his associate in the work of education. Youngest of all was the twenty-six year old Father Tracol before whom lay

sixty-three years of labour in the community. The remaining five were Fathers Payan, Pages, Fayolle, Vallon and Martinesche.

The new community was entrusted with the direction of the Little Seminary of the diocese. This was to be in two divisions, one at Annonay, the other at Maison-Seule, in the parish of St. Basil, and from this second house the community chose its patron. We cannot refer to the community at this time as a religious congregation since its members did not bind themselves to the vow of poverty. For this reason, later harsh laws of the French government directed against religious congregations engaged in teaching did not affect the Basilians who, in official eyes, were regarded as hired teachers.

As the years passed, many former pupils of the Annonay establishment rose to places of ecclesiastical prominence. One, Armand, Comte de Charbonnel was named second bishop of Toronto--he was soon to request his Alma Mater for assistance in his missionary diocese, embracing more than half of Ontario.

In January 1850 the city of Toronto, in Canada West, numbered some 25,000 souls, of whom 8000 were Catholics. There were two Catholic churches, St. Paul's and the recently opened St. Michael's Cathedral. There was of course no seminary, no Catholic college, no Catholic hospital.

There were no charitable institutions, no convents and no religious communities except the Sisters of Loretto, whom Bishop Power had brought to Canada from Ireland in 1847.

The diocese of Toronto had been erected by a bull of Pope Gregory XVI dated December 17, 1841. A division of the then vast diocese of Kingston had been made and that portion of Ontario lying west of the Village of Newcastle was erected into a separate jurisdiction and Father Michael Power, a Nova Scotian by birth, whose sacerdotal ministry centred around the Montreal area, was consecrated first bishop of Toronto, May 8, 1842.

On October 1, 1847 Bishop Power died, while actively engaged in carrying out his priestly duties amid the fever ridden immigrants who were flocking into his episcopal city. During the three years following the death of Bishop Power, the diocese was administered at first, conjointly by Archdeacon J. Hay and Father John Carroll. After the premature death of Archdeacon Hay in February 19, 1849, Father Carroll became sole administrator. The debt on the new Cathedral was assumed and guaranteed by two wealthy converts from Anglicanism, Honourable John Elmsley and Samuel Goodenough Lynn and the Church was consecrated by Bishop Bourget of Montreal, assisted by the bishops of Kingston and Bytown, September 29, 1848.

The diocese contained only twenty-eight priests, with a resident clergyman at St. Paul's in Toronto and one in each of Hamilton, London, Newmarket, Whitby, Adjala, Penetang, Niagara and St. Catharines. The other clergy covered immense territories caring for the nearly 100,000 Catholics who made up the 400,000 population of the sprawling Toronto diocese.

To fill the vacancy, caused by the death of Bishop Power, the bishops and priests of Canada suggested Father John Larkin, a Sulpician of Montreal. Father Larkin declined the honour and refused to accept the bulls. The Canadian hierarchy then asked the Propaganda to appoint Father de Charbonnel, who had previously taught theology at the Sulpician Seminary at Montreal. A Frenchman, Father Armand-François-Marie, Comte de Charbonnel, was teaching at Aix, France when informed of his selection as bishop of Toronto. He was consecrated by Pope Pius IX, May 26, 1850.

In 1850 Toronto was peopled to an overwhelming extent by those of Anglo-Saxon origin, many of Loyalist stock. It developed as a centre of a British colony which was calculated apparently to check American expansion northward. Toronto was thus very British and anti-American and was also largely anti-French: this latter feeling of hostility was increased by Toronto's overwhelming Protestantism which strengthened and cemented its antipathy to

Roman Catholic Quebec. The community was largely insulated from the liberalizing influences of very direct contacts with the outside world. Added to Toronto's pro-British, anti-American, anti-French and anti-Catholic feelings came the natural satisfaction of an urban centre which was progressing industrially. To envious rivals this feeling passed for smugness.

Located on the shores of Lake Ontario and hemmed in by the Don River, Toronto's early expansion tended to take a westerly and northerly direction as evident from the building of St. Mary's, St. Basil's and St. Patrick's churches in the period shortly after 1850.

It was a city of opposites--in the down town area could be found streets, wide in comparison with those of France, and large stores offering products similar to those of New York and Paris, while in the northern areas geese and cows wandered at will. The plank sidewalks of the centre part of town were replaced by country roads in the residential sections and by mere trails in the regions now known as Brockton on the west and the St. Clair-Eglinton section in the north.

Politically Toronto was Tory in outlook. This meant that the community advocated a strong Empire, and monarchy with an intense antipathy towards Americans and the Church of Rome and a belief in the maintenance of the propertied classes and of the political and economic status quo.

In religion, Toronto was militarily Protestant. It went through its formative period during the time of the evangelical revival which included within its scope not only Protestantism in general but also the evangelical wing of the Church of England. The Pope's Bull, creating a Papal hierarchy in England, had been followed in 1850 by the appointment of Cardinal Wiseman as Archbishop of Westminster. English Protestants regarded this action of the Vatican as presumptive and aggressive and an indignant anti-popery feeling broke out including among its members such men as Gladstone and Disraeli. The feeling was vividly reflected among the protestant population of Toronto fanned by George Brown who published in his "Toronto Globe" on December 18, 1850 a copy of Cardinal Wiseman's manifesto accompanied by a long and trenchant article written from a strictly Protestant point of view. The alarm, having thus been sounded, was taken up by the press of the country.

The strength of formal religion showed itself in the multiplicity of churches (in 1850, there were 25 churches in Toronto). Already in 1850 the strength of Toronto's puritanical moral sense in regard to the keeping of the Sabbath and temperance was evident. The Sabbatarian movement held for complete inactivity on Sunday save for religious duties. In 1850 the temperance movement was at flood tide as indicated by a great demonstration in July which began with a parade and ended with a soiree in Temperance Hall.

Of even more explosive potentialities was the strength of the Orange movement in Toronto. This movement served to unite the Protestants against Catholics and French Canadians. The Orangemen were a fiery element, always capable of vigorous demonstration when any favour to French or Catholics seemed likely. Their ludicrous attempts to associate the Prince of Wales with Orangeism on the occasion of the royal visit to Toronto and their attacks on the Duke of Newcastle bear proof of this.

As a result of the Irish potato famine in 1848, many Irish immigrants found their way to Toronto in 1850 and supplied the backbone of the Catholic Church as well as the Orange order. From the time of its establishment, the Catholic Church proceeded to develop and to constitute the object of criticism and verbal attack from the Orangemen.

Religiously, politically and socially, Canada West and, Toronto in particular, witnessed tremendous movements in the decade 1850-60. The Union of the Canadas was increasingly becoming more unpopular as Canada West first equated and then exceeded the population of Canada East and the embers of the 1837 rebellion still smouldered. While Lord Elgin was stoned and the Parliament buildings were burned by English speaking Tories in Montreal in 1849, Toronto too, was the scene of frenzied demonstrations. Tory and Orange mobs attacked the homes of Baldwin and Blake and burned the reform chieftains in effigy.

The Irish Catholics found themselves in a difficult position politically. Reform policies pleased them but the person of George Brown, rapidly establishing his clear Grit party in opposition to the Tories, alienated them.

Week after week, in vile and slanderous language, Brown in the column of his powerful paper the "Globe" attacked what he called Romish aggressions and the Catholic schools and held up to ridicule the cherished beliefs of the Catholic people. Besides the "Globe" there were four other newspapers: the "Examiner" a reform paper which in 1855 merged with the "Globe": the "Patriot", a strong Tory paper: the "British Colonist" which represented the Scottish Conservative element: the "Mirror", the champion of the Catholic cause. The Canadian Freeman, known from 1854 to 1858 as the "Catholic Citizen", supplemented the "Mirror" in expressing Catholic thought.

Economic depression in 1849, added to the political disgust engendered by the passing of the Rebellion Losses Bill, led high ranking Tories such as Sir John Abbott of Montreal and Sir David McPherson of Toronto to circulate a manifesto for separation from the British crown and annexation with the United States. Support for this measure came from other supposedly loyal Tories in the persons of the Molsons, Redpaths and Sir Alexander Galt.

Canadian life thus saw religious, economic and political aims intertwined in a very complex manner. A measure of prosperity engulfed Toronto in the early 50's.

The city enjoyed the combined affects of the first railway boom and of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854. During this period Toronto made distinct progress towards the position of an economic metropolis. The Stock Exchange was established in 1855. Manufacturing establishments increased in size and number while in the field of transportation Toronto began to construct a network of railways with itself as a focal point. Toronto prospered during the period and its prosperity was reflected in the increase of its population which reached 44,000 by 1861.

It was into this turbulent maelstrom of political and economic strife, with religious and racial animosity rife, that Bishop Charbonnel in the company of a Basilian priest, soon to be followed by four other priests, of the same community, arrived from France. With an inadequate knowledge of the English language and understanding but imperfectly the mentality of English speaking people, entirely unfamiliar with life in a definitely Protestant locale, unaccustomed to the rigours of a Canadian winter as much as to the differences in food and drink, these few Basilians proceeded not only to establish themselves as a teaching body in Toronto but ultimately to evolve into a distinctly Canadian community and a religious congregation with offshoots in many parts of Canada and the United States. These with additional problems demanded almost superhuman courage.

CHAPTER I

IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS SURROUNDING THE TORONTO FOUNDATION

From his short sojourn in Montreal with the Sulpicians Bishop Charbonnel had some slight information about the glaring needs of the Toronto diocese and so even prior to his departure for America, the bishop was in communication with the Basilian Superior General, Father Tourvieille, and made a formal request for the services of Father Molony. In answer to this request, Father Tourvieille replied: "in conformity with the practice of other congregations we should like if possible to send another subject, a Frenchman, with Father Molony."¹

Five days later, July 19, 1850, Father Tourvieille wrote again: "M. Molony and another of our confrères (M. Payan) are at your disposition for a year and a half or two years or more."²

Knowing the many difficulties to face a non-English speaking priest in Toronto, the bishop declined the offer

¹Reverend P. Tourvieille, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, July 14, 1850, quoted by Rev. L. Shook, The Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report, 1950, p.38.

²Shook, op. cit., p. 38.

of a companion for Father Molony. There is no further mention of Father Payan and so Father Molony was the only Basilian to accompany the bishop to Toronto.

From the outset, the position of Father Molony in Toronto was on the one hand that of a secular priest assisting in St. Michael's Cathedral, and on the other that of a Basilian, teaching in the ecclesiastical school which the bishop set up in the Cathedral rectory on his arrival.³ In addition, his duties included the preaching of retreats and a chaplaincy with the military garrison stationed in Toronto. The zeal of Bishop Charbonnel was manifested in the large number of converts and the return of many lapsed Catholics to the true fold and so great was the demand for priests that Father Molony was relieved of his pedagogical duties in January 1851.⁴ However this first Basilian spent a great deal of time pondering the advisability of establishing an institution in Canada. He was aware that his fellow boarder at the Cathedral, a Jesuit, Father Tellier had been given a property of fifty acres with a large house by Captain Elmsley on condition that the Society erect a college.⁵

³Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. Chavanon, November 13, 1850 p. 2. (Basilian correspondence quoted in this thesis is preserved in the Basilian Archives, Annonay, France, unless otherwise noted.)

⁴Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. Tourvieille, April 22, 1851, p.1.

⁵Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. Chavanon, November 13, 1850, p.2.

Too, he knew that the bishop intended giving a somewhat similar grant to the Basilians in the London area.⁶ The advantages were apparent as London was a rapidly growing community in the centre of a rich and commercial countryside. In addition, the pastor was a personal friend of Father Molony's who was very anxious to see the community installed in his vicinity. Hamilton, too, with its ideal location on Lake Ontario and its proximity to both the Niagara region and Toronto provided an appealing site.

Despite the potentialities of these other centres in Canada West, circumstances arose that made Toronto the logical centre for Basilian activities. The efforts of Father Tellier to establish a Jesuit foundation and to take advantage of the Elmsley grant were to no avail as the Society simply lacked men to staff an educational institution. Only eight Jesuits in Canada administered Indian mission work, parishes in Sandwich and Waterloo and the college of Ste. Marie in Montreal. Moreover great patience was needed while awaiting Bishop Charbonnel's efforts to provide his sparsely settled diocese with priests. Despairing of making headway against these two great problems, Father Tellier left Toronto in 1852 with the firm belief that "there is nothing a Community can do in this diocese."⁷

⁶Ibid., p.3.

⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to a Confrère, 1854, p.2.

IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS SURROUNDING THE TORONTO FOUNDATION 4

In his efforts to obtain priests, Bishop Charbonnel wrote his good friend, Bishop Guigues of Bytown now Ottawa, in the hope that some Oblates might be available.

I desire to give your congregation three of four districts of my diocese of which Niagara is the most important---you will found a school for young men at Hamilton---I will furnish nourishment the first year.⁸

In reply Bishop Charbonnel received some hope: "I count on at least two Oblates to help in Hamilton--at any rate talk it over with the Oblate Visitor General who will arrive in the spring."⁹ Despite his efforts the Toronto bishop was unsuccessful in acquiring help from the Oblate Community, except for two Irish Oblates from Marseilles who became secularized. It was the traditional view of the Oblates to possess churches as their own property, and to secure an establishment sufficiently large to provide accommodation for several members: "we would prefer a barracks and rule to sumptuous quarters for an individual."¹⁰ With these views Bishop Charbonnel was not in agreement. Moreover the Oblates had already taken obligations in Buffalo in 1850

⁸Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Bishop Guigues, January 10, 1851. (Preserved in the Registered Letters of Bishop Guigues,⁹ vol.4, p.18, Archives of Archdiocese of Ottawa.)

⁹Bishop Guigues, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, January, 1851, Op.Cit.

¹⁰Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourville, September 10, 1853, p.1. In this letter Rev. J. Malbos quotes the aim of the Oblates.

and the problem of personnel added to the other obstacles made the hope of an Oblate foundation, in the Toronto diocese, an impossibility.

In the face of these circumstances Bishop Charbonnel, in March 1852, turned to the Basilian Community for a foundation in Toronto, to include a parish, an educational institution and the formation of a Little Seminary.¹¹

The petition of the Toronto bishop had been anticipated by Father Tourvieille since the departure of Father Molony, and despite the obvious results in France, the Superior General was inclined to look favourably on the episcopal petition. He realized the needs of the vast, sprawling Canadian diocese exceeded those of his native land and that they were to be supplied even if it meant rejecting appeals for new schools in France.

Before writing to Father Tourvieille, the bishop discussed the plans of a Basilian establishment with Father Molony. The latter not only relayed the invitation to his Superior General but added many observations necessary for a successful foundation. After relating the proposed work, Father Molony emphasized the need of forming a Basilian house in Toronto separate and distinct from the bishop's, where

¹¹Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 30, 1852, p.3.

the members could live together subject to the same rules governing the foundation at Annonay. Because of the enormous debt of the Toronto diocese, the bishop preferred to pay the members a fixed annual salary and to keep all the income or receipts of the missions or school entrusted to the Community. This episcopal demand was an instrumental factor, also, in the decision of the other religious communities to reject the Toronto bishop's plea. To the Basilian Fathers, however, this did not prove much of a deterrent, in that it did not greatly alter their status of hired teachers, a position to which they were accustomed since the inception of the Community.

In April, 1852, Father Tourvieille was in receipt of a letter from Father Molony which disclosed some of the bishop's immediate plans:

The bishop is now converting the episcopal palace into a college or high school to be conducted by the Brothers... he is going to build us a house and we can live in community and as soon as possible lay the foundations of a Little Seminary.¹²

The Bishop himself wrote to the same effect, pointing out the enormity of his financial burdens and on May 5, 1852, received the assent of Father Tourvieille who added that he desired a formal agreement to avoid any future confusion. In conformity with the request of the General, Bishop Charbonnel replied:

¹²ibid., April 29, 1852, p. 1.

The expenses of the voyage will be mine; I promise to your men a house, furniture, fifty louis for food and support for each priest who knows English well enough to be of service---your priests will share Father Molony's work and will be asked to found a Little Seminary---at my expense. ¹³

From the foregoing proposals and the observations of Father Molony certain facts stand out. The prime work of the Basilians in Toronto was to be the establishment of a Little Seminary which was to be owned by the bishop. Diocesan work similar to that of Father Molony was to be an added project; a house for the community was to be furnished by the bishop, so that a religious life in common could be observed and in a short period a parish church was to be entrusted to the Congregation. To be assured of at least some English speaking priests, the bishop offered the meagre salary only to those whose English was satisfactory.

Having accepted Bishop Charbonnel's proposal, the problem of selecting the four new men who were to make the new foundation promised to present difficulties to the General and his council. In this situation Providence made use of a prominent Toronto lawyer, Samuel Lynn, a convert from Anglicanism. So zealous was he for the advancement of Catholicism in Toronto, that he combined a business trip to Europe with a visit to Annonay for the express purpose of urging the Basilian Community to accede to the wishes

¹³ Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Rev.P. Tourvieille, June 5, 1852, p.2.

of the Bishop. His visit "excited the zeal of our young confrères, Messrs. Vincent and Flannery, and influenced Father Malbos also to accept the mission."¹⁴ The two young men were clerics in minor orders while Father Malbos had been teaching in the Basilian school at Privas, France, since his ordination in 1847.

After some deliberation Father Malbos was appointed treasurer and the important post of superior was conferred on Father Soulerin, whom Father Molony described as "your best man."¹⁵ It was no exaggeration as the newly appointed superior was one of the most distinguished and promising priests of the community. He had very nearly been elected Superior General in 1848 and was to succeed Father Actorie in this position in 1865. Unless there was some other reason and there is no evidence to substantiate this supposition, the appointment of Father Soulerin indicated a co-operation on the part of the Basilians, beyond the fondest hopes of Bishop Charbonnel.

The little band left France in August reaching New York, August 17, and Toronto, August 21, 1852. Despite lonesomeness, Father Soulerin made an important observation

¹⁴Rev. P. Tourvielle, Journal of College of Annon-
ay 1851-1855, June 5, 1852, p. 42.

¹⁵Shook, Op.Cit., p.47.

in the American city where he spent a day at the house of the Mercy Fathers.

They are in much the same position as we are, save that they have built their own lovely church---we visited too the Redemptorist Fathers in Rochester. They have built both a church and a school at their own expense.¹⁶

The practice of building a church or a school by a community was a novelty to the Basilian Fathers. In France they were accustomed to assist the diocesan clergy in churches and schools owned by the episcopal authority; even in the treaty with Bishop Charbonnel, the practice was to be continued.

Between August 21 and September 4, 1852 the Basilian community lodged in the Toronto Cathedral palace, while awaiting the completion of a house on Queen Street which was to serve temporarily as both the Little Seminary and the residence of the Congregation. The church, promised by the bishop, was to be opened the following spring and made available to the Basilians, though owned by the diocese.¹⁷ Located at the corner of Adelaide and Bathurst Streets, the foundation was to include the brick church, St. Mary's, and a wooden structure to serve as the Little Seminary. With this plan in mind the temporary building on Queen Street

p.2. ¹⁶Rev. J. Soulerin, Undated Letter to Rev. Deglesne,

¹⁷Ibid., p.3.

was named 'St. Mary's Seminary', and this ecclesiastical school was opened September 15, 1852, with nine students.¹⁸

While the Basilians had been engaged to administer the Little Seminary, Bishop Charbonnel had obtained the services of the Christian Brothers to conduct a school for boys of high school or college age who sought a secular education.¹⁹ This school was to occupy a wing of the Palace, constructed during the spring and summer of 1852, and was to be separate from St. Mary's Seminary, though it was hoped that some of the students might evince signs of a vocation. Called 'St. Michael's College' it was ready for occupancy at the same time the Little Seminary opened its portals. In spite of the best efforts of both the bishop and the Christian Brothers, St. Michael's College enjoyed little success and after a half year, its student body totalled only eight.²⁰ The slow progress of the College contrasted unfavourably with the seeming rapid development of the Seminary where the same period saw a rapid increase of students.²¹

¹⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Journal of St. Mary's Seminary, Toronto, 1852-1853, p.8.

¹⁹Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. Tourvieille, April 29, 1852, p.2.

²⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, January 9, 1853, p.1.

²¹Ibid., p.2. Father Soulerin mentioned that the enrolment for St. Mary's reached a total of twenty-one students.

Nevertheless the picture was far from promising to the bishop who not only was saddled with the salaries of the three Basilians whose language was adequate but also with the rent of the Queen Street house, while at the same time he was denied most of the tuition because of the poverty of the students. In the face of the Cathedral debt and other pressing financial needs, it seemed that some modifications of the treaty were required.

In the midst of the uncertainty generated by the financial-administrative problems, the little band of five Basilians were encountering additional problems of a different nature. In the Little Seminary, life for the Basilians approximated that of Annonay. While continuing their theology under Fathers Soulerin and Malbos, Messrs. Flannery and Vincent did school work, the former teaching the six youngest students, the latter acting as a supervisor while improving his English. Fathers Malbos and Molony divided lessons for the other students. A small cabinet donated by a friend was constructed into an altar by Mr. Vincent and placed in the parlour which faced Queen Street. In this parlour on the first floor of the two-story dwelling the confrères met for their religious exercises of meditation, examen and reading. Chaplaincy duties to the Ladies of Loretto and the Sisters of St. Joseph were entrusted to Fathers Malbos and Molony while Father Soulerin was appointed confessor of the Brothers. Week-end ministerial work was at

first centred in the Cathedral and then in the mission areas of Weston, Brockton and further away communities. The preaching of retreats was a regular practice. In the absence of Bishop Charbonnel, Father Soulerin was usually appointed to replace him in his minor work, such as the blessing and laying of corner-stones and in a secretarial capacity.²²

While the problem of poverty faced Bishop Charbonnel it was no less a difficulty for the Congregation. Each member received a salary from Annonay but unfortunately the prices of Canadian articles greatly exceeded the French ones and only three of the five Basilians received the episcopal salary. Twenty-five louis were needed annually for school up-keep, light and heat, and a similar amount was spent on washing and medical supplies. Sacrifices were required, and in a letter to Father Polly, Father Malbos writes "Father Soulerin gives us each only one piece of paper; it is awfully expensive."²³ In addition to poverty, other problems presented themselves. Just prior to moving into the Queen Street house, and while still guests of the bishop, the Fathers were introduced to a boiled diet of meat, fish, cabbages and potatoes. In addition to boiled meat,

²²Ibid., October 1, 1852, p.1. This letter contains scattered references to the early work of the Community.

²³Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. Polly, August 29, 1852, p.2.

three yellow roots formed the basis of dinner, while breakfast meant butter and a few cups of coffee with milk, and the evening meal consisted of butter, an egg and three cups of tea. As Father Malbos adds "the cooking and the change of food is enough to disturb many,"²⁴ while Father Soulerin in referring to the bishop's temperance edict, whimsically deploras the effort of Lake Ontario waters to make up for the loss of wine.²⁵ At the Queen Street house meals were very similar though carrots and potatoes usually augmented the dinner meal at noon. The lenten regime of porridge and cod was a least a change from the regular fare.

No less foreign to the Fathers than the diet were the customs of the people of Toronto. As a result of the external ministry work, Father Soulerin writes "we travel as much in a week as in two years in France."²⁶ Horse and carriage was the usual means of transportation to the Weston mission with a brief rest period at Brockton while the distance to the convents was covered on foot. Father

²⁴Ibid., p.3

²⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, May 16, 1953, p.1.

²⁶Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Charmont, October 1, 1852, p.1.

Malbos on returning from his daily visit to Loretto Convent could not contain his amazement at the exaggerations that served as advertising in the local stores--only the Toronto newspapers compared in misrepresentation, so that they could "disconcert even the most famous liar."²⁷ This exaggeration was not reflected, however, in the religious practices of the Toronto Catholics, most of whom were of Irish descent. In fact they could serve as a source of edification so "remarkable are they in their faith and piety."²⁸ Varieties of weather, too, influenced the customs of the people. The Basilians, used to the warmth of the Midi, were totally unprepared for the cold climate of the Toronto winter months, and the effort to purchase adequate clothing taxed to the limit the resources of the little community. Flannels had to be obtained as well as heavy overcoats, strong top-boots, rubbers, and ordinary gloves which were worn inside the Newfoundland dog-skin ones which reached to the elbow. Fur hats covered the head and neck, and shawls were wrapped securely around the face to protect nose and ears. In this enormity of clothing the Fathers were distinguished from the citizenry only by their ecclesiastical soutane. In this garb the Fathers were ready for either work in the city or for

²⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. Achille, December 3, 1852, p.3.

²⁸Rev. I. Malbos, Letter to Rev. Charmont, January 5, 1853, p.2.

exercise which consisted of walking on the ice of Toronto Bay with the students. The winter weather was much preferred to the Spring thawing period when the mud oozing through the plank sidewalks made walking a hazardous exploit. Strange, too, to the Fathers, was the spirit of independence evident in the students. Unaccustomed as the Basilians were to the tradition of absolute rule whether exercised by a Bourbon or a Bonaparte, the majority of Toronto citizens traditionally witnessed important laws decided by a majority vote in Parliament. So the Little Seminary students were "naturally inclined to demand a reason for certain rules."²⁹ It was certainly strange to the Basilians to have the students question the practicality of winter walks, but the faith of the boys was so strong that reference to the example of the Divine Model immediately quelled their opposition.

Money, relatively scarce for the Annonay community, was even more of a problem for the Basilians in Canada because of the higher prices. A soutane costing sixty francs in France sold for ninety francs in Toronto and other articles were comparative. To make up for this disparity local employees received higher wages but the Congregation members received only the yearly salary of two hundred francs

²⁹Ibid., p.1.

whether living in Europe or America.³⁰

With utter amazement Father Soulerin noted the rapidity of construction in Canada. Compared with the youthful boisterousness which rebuilt the burnt Protestant Cathedral in Toronto in five months, France seemed "slow, even backward."³¹ The Basilian Fathers could not help but feel this quick tempo which pervaded every phase of life, even the making of important decisions, a feature calculated to jar the more conservative tendencies of the General Council in Annonay.

Perhaps the greatest initial difficulty facing the infant Community was the problem of language. Fathers Soulerin and Malbos, though passable with English were frequently perplexed; the latter made only one effort to preach in the novel tongue while the former, though more advanced, seldom preached without reading his matter. It was not until Father Vincent became superior that his language problem was solved. Of course Father Molony and Father Flannery, after his ordination, experienced no difficulties and it was consequently on them that the chief burdens of the external ministry fell. In an effort to solve the problem Father Soulerin introduced the custom of speaking English at

³⁰Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.2. Mention is made that labour in Canada earned eleven francs a day.

³¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 14, 1855, p.1.

all times and induced the members to pledge themselves to this practice.³² It was a very difficult rule to follow in face of all the other problems and Father Vincent frequently lapsed despite his good intentions. The conduct of the students was particularly gratifying in that far from deriding the feeble efforts of the Frenchmen "they always strained to hear them with much attention."³³ The early letters of Father Soulerin are filled with suggestions to the General concerning the language difficulties...the most frequent request was the necessity of teaching English to the students at Annonay and particularly to any of the novices who showed some inclination to volunteer for the Canadian mission. In the final analysis the language dilemma was an important factor in inducing Father Soulerin to concentrate on the acquiring of Canadian vocations in preference to French ones. The embarrassment which filled the Basilians when speaking with adults can also be traceable to the language difficulty; in comparison with the poise of the Oblates and Jesuits the Basilians frequently appeared perplexed.³⁴ Father Soulerin felt that while the other communities were no better educated, the Basilians' timidity was based on an

³²Rev. P. Flannery, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, December 1, 1852, p.2.

³³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, January 7, 1853, p.2.

³⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, February 10, 1855, p.3.

inferiority complex springing from defective English.

Before leaving the study of the initial difficulties of the Congregation, the subject of lonesomeness should be considered. Though relegated to a place of near obscurity by the constant activity of the Fathers, lonesomeness was experienced on occasion. The frequent reminiscences, the inquiries on the health of loved ones, the expressions of displeasure over short and infrequent letters, the joy at receiving communications from France with the attendant relaxation of the rule to permit talking at dinner, the eloquent pleading of Father Vincent to visit his aged parent and the desire to have a daily account of the Annonay weather all show that the Basilian Fathers were truly human, and in addition to the other Toronto problems, were forced to undergo the pangs of lonesomeness.

The problem of lack of finances which so distressed the Basilians continued to be felt by the Bishop. The continued loss of revenue at the Queen Street school as a result of the students' inability to pay tuition with the extremely slow progress of St. Michael's College in the Palace made Bishop Charbonnel change his educational policy. Even before Christmas of 1852 the bishop was deliberating with the idea of modifying the treaty made with the Congregation and instead of permitting them to occupy the nearly

completed edifices at Adelaide and Bathurst Streets, to have them dwell in the Palace and to set up the Little Seminary in the area where St. Michael's College had been located. This meant the withdrawal of the Christian Brothers.

As the time for occupancy of the new St. Mary's Church and Seminary approached, anxieties filled the hearts of the Basilians. On the one hand, occupancy of St. Mary's Church would provide a solution to the cramped quarters on Queen Street but on the other hand, both the Jesuits and Oblates had objected to being mere hired priests administering a church, the entire revenue of which became the bishop's. Moreover, through personal observation Father Soulerin had noticed that most American ecclesiastical institutions under the jurisdiction of religious, were both constructed and owned by the religious. "I would like to do as the other religious orders...they have churches of their own."³⁵ Moreover, a certain amount of security was needed for the continuance of the Congregation and while it was the wish of Bishop Charbonnel to maintain St. Mary's in Basilian hands, exigencies might arise under the tenure of a succeeding bishop that would lead to the expulsion of the Fathers. It was thus with mixed feelings that the Community viewed the rapid

³⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, October 1, 1852, p.2.

construction of the new residence and Church and when the bishop, for his purposes, proposed the diversion of St. Mary's to secular control and the Little Seminary building to the Sisters of Loretto, he was not opposed by the Fathers. Yet, his suggestion that Basilians occupy the Palace was not in conformity with the ideas of a separate house envisioned by Father Soulerin. In the face of this reluctance, on the part of the Basilians to fit in completely with the bishop's ideas, Bishop Charbonnel broached the possibility of a later location in any one of three districts in the city of Toronto.³⁶ At most, the Palace occupancy was to be but a temporary move in the minds of the Fathers.

Before moving into the Palace early in February, 1853, many problems had to be solved.³⁷ Tact and understanding would be required for the withdrawal of the Christian Brothers and their relegation to the teaching of elementary children. Would it be possible to include the former high school students of the Brothers in the classes of the Little Seminary thus changing its status from a pure to a mixed institution? Close association with the Bishop could

³⁶Ibid., December, 1852, p.1.

³⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, January 21, 1853, p.2. Mention is made that occupancy of the Palace by the Basilians would occur in a few weeks.

conceivably result in the ultimate secularization of the community or possibly lead to arguments over the priority of authority of Bishop and Superior over Basilians.

The bishop was not slow at reaching a decision and by February 14, 1853, the Christian Brothers had departed from the Palace to teach in two elementary Toronto schools. While their departure proved a boon to their successors, in that desks, beds and mattresses were left, Father Soulerin could not help but reflect that the Brothers had been treated rather unfairly; "it takes more than four or five months to judge the success or failure of an enterprise."³⁸ The bishop determined that some means of financial support would relieve him of debts accruing from his educational policy and at the diocesan retreat of 1853 he informed his clergy that one-tenth of their parish revenue would be collected for Seminary support. To this was also added a government grant of £400 and the entire proceeds of two annual parish collections.³⁹

In January, 1853 the Basilians were informed of the full nature of the bishop's plans. The Congregation would be lodged in the Palace and in the house adjoining it and the dining-room and table fare would be in common with

³⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, February 21, 1853, p.2.

³⁹Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.1.

the bishop and his staff. In addition the Little Seminary would become a mixed school composed of students with both secular and ecclesiastical pursuits. To the added burden of teaching resulting from this new arrangement, the Basilians were to take care of the Cathedral which prompted Father Soulerin to utter "this is more of a job than five poor Basilians can handle."⁴⁰ Unity of administration of Cathedral, Seminary and Congregation was the aim of the bishop: precisely the opposite was the aim of the Basilians who feared the loss of their Community identity under such a plan. This fear was the basic reason for the Basilian petition to Bishop Charbonnel which demanded a complete separation of administration in the Palace together with the immediate appointment of an assistant priest by the bishop for Cathedral duties incompatible with Seminary classes and exercises and the request that all episcopal orders to individual Basilians be referred first to the Basilian Superior. To this petition the bishop was quite receptive but failed to agree with the Congregation's desire for autonomy in the field of administration. In the minds of the Basilians,

the simplest arrangement would be for the bishop to have his own separate house and for us to live in ours, undisturbed by every stranger that he may invite to meals, able to perform our exercises with regularity, with stable hours and days set aside for confessions and preaching.⁴¹

⁴⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille,
January 23, 1853, p.1.

⁴¹Ibid., p.2.

When the Little Seminary moved from Queen Street into the Bishop's Palace it assumed the name of St. Michael's College and the term, St. Mary's Seminary, faded into obscurity. Not however fading into obscurity was the proposal of the bishop of a future establishment for the Basilians, possibly on the site offered to Father Tellier.

Once located within the portals of the Palace, the Congregation attempted to lead a normal community life. A certain amount of privacy was possible: Father Malbos rang the rising bell promptly at five a.m. each day and while no formal complaints were registered from the diocesan occupants, it must have been a source of annoyance. So busy was the bishop with other matters that he seldom intruded within the confines of the Basilian enclosure. However, the student body was growing rapidly, including as it did both aspirants for the priesthood and non-aspirants, and by November, 1853, the enrollment had reached the total of forty-seven, including thirty boarders.⁴² With every promise of a yearly increase of the student body, the Palace was simply too small. Moreover, while Bishop Charbonnel ignored the noise generated by the healthy boys this was no criterion of the attitude of future bishops, and this uncertainty only added to the insecurity felt by the Fathers. The failure of the

⁴¹Ibid., p.2.

⁴²Ibid., November 21, 1853, p.2.

bishop to appoint an assistant until 1855 meant that the Community mingled in "about a thousand things none of which directly concerns us."⁴³ The increased student body taxed, to the utmost, the strength of the priests who had to teach theology to two boys, and philosophy to five as well as the regular prescribed subjects to the boys of college and high school level. In their dilemma a happy compromise was reached in the assigning of high school classes to the more mature aspirants to the priesthood.⁴⁴ While this stratagem reduced the excesses of work in the classroom, it failed to allay the gradual growth of discontent among the confreres.

The following year, 1854, saw a further increase in the student body and despite the discomforts of the Fathers, Father Soulerin could write "we are admired and our work is appreciated, and His Lordship is well satisfied."⁴⁵ Towards the end of the year conditions reached an impasse; certain that a separate house was needed if the Congregation was to

⁴³Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 19, 1853, p.3.

⁴⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 21, 1853, p.1. Messrs. Rooney and Keleher were conducting classes, supplementing the Basilians.

⁴⁵Ibid., January 2, 1854, p.1.

enjoy harmony, to maintain its high reputation and to endure, the superior was in an unenviable position. On the one hand the confrères were disgruntled and as Father Soulerin writes "I was attacked as if I was the only cause of our protracted stay in the Palace where we seem to be something but can do nothing."⁴⁶ On the other hand the edifying patience of the superior was taxed to the utmost in an effort to maintain harmonious relations with Bishop Charbonnel. Keeping the example of the capable and eloquent Father Tellier before his eyes, the Superior avoided his impatience and while doing and saying everything possible to obtain a separate house, was always prudent enough not to say a word that could be misconstrued by the energetic and zealous bishop. Patient waiting and co-operation with episcopal authority was to be rewarded.

Before considering the events leading to the departure of the Basilians to Clover Hill, it is necessary to grasp an insight into the character and aims of the man who played such an important role in the formative period of the Congregation in Canada...Bishop Charbonnel. The attempts he made to solve his manifold problems frequently placed him, unknowingly, in the role of a stumbling block to the aspirations of the Basilians.

⁴⁶Ibid., November 8, 1854, p.3.

Standing out in any consideration of the life of Bishop Charbonnel is his sanctity. The promise of an eminently successful life in French politics held little appeal for him; instead, the Comte de Charbonnel chose an ecclesiastical future, which, for a short time, led him to the teaching of theology in the Montreal Sulpician Seminary. Always handicapped by serious eye disorders, the second bishop of Toronto was a dynamo of energy during his hierarchical period from 1850 to 1859. The final twenty years of the holy bishop's life were spent in contemplation in a French Capuchin monastery. Many spiritual writers claim it is difficult for ordinary people to live in close proximity with saints; if this is so, it is a further argument in the support of the bishop's sanctity.

In an effort to economize and to reduce the debt of the diocese, the actions of Bishop Charbonnel were, at times, criticized both by the laity and clergy: "he gives an example of frugality, simplicity and poverty and he wants his priests like that."⁴⁷ Though his restrictions and demands for one-tenth of parish revenues caused occasional mutterings, his wisdom was evident and his virtue was always extolled. Living in an area where drunkenness was rampant and raised in a country where the use of wine was so very

⁴⁷Ibid., March 13, 1855, p.2.

commonplace, the bishop was, nevertheless, the perfect example of temperance. Zealous in his attempts to gain justice in the vexing school question and to obtain priests, the regular schedule of Bishop Charbonnel seemed beyond human endurance... "the bishop never remains anywhere without doing anything."⁴⁸ On the arrival of the Basilians, the bishop was in the midst of a thirty-day retreat with the Loretto Sisters and scarcely was this assignment concluded than he set out for Montreal and Quebec to contest the school question. His return to Toronto was marked by preparations for an arduous winter European trip to solicit vocations for his diocese but this trip was preceded by the preaching of a priests' retreat in Cincinnati and a tiring trip through his diocese by train, ship and canoe for confirming, preaching and catechizing. It is little wonder that his incessant activity, his ardent zeal and his economic administration made Father Soulerin remark that "at times, one scarcely feels comfortable near him."⁴⁹ The single purpose of Bishop Charbonnel was the good of his diocese, and this good admitted of various levels. Unfortunately for the success of the Basilian Community, the bishop felt that greater goods than secondary and college education existed and of necessity must have a priority.

⁴⁸Ibid., October 1, 1852, p.1.

⁴⁹Ibid., April 9, 1853, p.1.

Foremost in the mind of Bishop Charbonnel was the need of priests. Added to this problem the bishop was confronted with the diocesan financial situation, the need of Catholic separate schools, the erection of a Catholic hospital and a House of Providence for the aged. In addition "the bishop maintained a constant vigilance against the inroads of divorce and secret societies."⁵⁰ For the Basilian Fathers, the prime aim of their foundation was, of course, the education of young men for the priesthood and so it seemed that the aims of both principals concurred but when circumstances intervened to thrust the growing number of non-aspirants on the Basilians, the Bishop was not slow to show his reluctance to foster such an undertaking. The fear that St. Michael's might gradually lose its seminary character was one of the reasons for the retention of the Community at the Palace when the members yearned for a house of their own. We see, more clearly, the capability of Father Soulerin in preventing any breach of good relations between his frustrated confreres and the bishop, hard-pressed in the accomplishment of his aims. To realize these aims and problems of the bishop is essential if we are to have a clear grasp of the difficulties surrounding the position of the Fathers.

⁵⁰ Editorial from The Catholic Freeman of Toronto August 26, 1859, p.2, c.1.

Saddled with the huge Cathedral debt, Bishop Charbonnel bent every effort at its reduction and on January 7, 1854, he was able to write to the Cardinal Prefect of the Propagation of the Faith in Rome: "I have reduced the debt by 30,000 francs this past year."⁵¹ This was a real accomplishment when we consider that the Catholics in the Toronto diocese were uniformly poor, the majority of them having emigrated during the preceding decade from Ireland, poverty-stricken through the failures of the potato crops. It was common knowledge that the bishop was poor and that he wore the robes and clothes of his predecessor. In his letters he constantly asked prayers for the relief of his poor diocese.⁵² In his educational program, one thousand louis had been expended in constructing the building adjacent to the Cathedral. The contemplated vacating of this edifice by the Basilians would be a serious blow to the bishop's economy and it is little wonder that he could not concur wholeheartedly with the desires of the Community.

Bishop Charbonnel was prompted to detain the Basilians in his palace from religious reasons also—the need of priests to act as missionaries. Throughout the letters of

⁵¹Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoni, January 7, 1854. (Preserved in Bishop Charbonnel's Letter Book, p.40, Archives of Archdiocese of Toronto.

⁵²Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 28, 1852, p.1.

the Basilians written to the Superior General, the lack of priests, to carry out the Sacred Ministry in the Toronto diocese was a constant topic. Father Soulerin mentioned that there were only four priests in the city at the time of his arrival.⁵³ In a letter to the novices, Father Flannery describes his missionary activity just ten miles from Toronto and just beyond the banks of the Humber River. In this area, now the busy industrial site of Weston, the Basilian priest visited a cottage to find that its inhabitants had not seen a priest for seven years.⁵⁴ This circumstance was not the result of any laziness--it was just too difficult for some of the pioneer families to make their way through the savage terrain and the monstrous forests that bordered the Humber. Their religion was deeply implanted in the adults of these old Catholic families but it was a matter of conjecture whether the faith could be maintained in the children who had never seen a priest nor assisted at Mass and the Sacraments. So serious was the situation that Father Soulerin, for a very short period, contemplated the feasibility of employing some of the Basilians in a mission capacity: "Basilians are needed in Canada far more than in a little piece of France...Fathers Vincent and Flannery would do very

⁵³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, October 1, 1852, p.2.

⁵⁴Rev. P. Flannery, Letter to the Novices, August, 1853, p.4.

well in a mission."⁵⁵ This consideration was short lived in the face of the necessity of education but his feelings indicated the tremendous task of the bishop, who wrote to the Propagation of the Faith: "I need good priests and it is absolutely necessary that I find them myself."⁵⁶

The tremendous co-operation of the people made the bishop feel, even more, his responsibility of providing priests. "It is nothing for the Catholics in this area to travel six or seven miles on foot in the midst of a Canadian winter to get to mass."⁵⁷ The bishop was tireless in his efforts to fill the great need of his diocese. His first action on arrival was the establishment of a Little Seminary and this was followed by constant petitions to Rome and to neighbouring American dioceses for volunteers. His requests were directed, too, to religious orders, notably the Oblates, Jesuits and Marists. An arduous journey to Europe was made in the winter of 1852-53 to look for priests willing to come to his diocese and a later trip was taken for the same reason. Undoubtedly the lack of success which met these episcopal overtures was caused by the dangers, both spiritual and

⁵⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 5, 1854, p.2.

⁵⁶Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoni, August 31, 1855. (Preserved in the Registered Letters of Bishop Guigues, Vol. 8, p.331, Archives of Archdiocese of Ottawa.)

⁵⁷Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 30, 1852, p.3.

physical, that faced the missionary. At any rate we can realize the feelings of the zealous bishop as he viewed the five Basilian priests in the Palace. Hopes of obtaining the Community priests for mission work could be held so long as the Basilians did not live in an educational establishment of their own. We thus see that for both spiritual and economic reasons it was to the interest of the bishop that the Congregation be detained in the Palace.

Despite the exigencies of the Bishop he was above using pressure on the Community and he adhered to the terms of the original treaty. In 1852 when it came time for the Fathers to take vows, the bishop officiated, though it was his express wish that the members refuse to bind themselves.⁵⁸ The taking of vows reduced the possibility of Community members devoting themselves to missionary work.⁵⁹

Fear for the constancy of the missionary priest living by himself was not only a source of worry to Father Soulerin but it had been one of the determining factors in the rejection of the bishop's request by the Oblate Community. Early in 1853 a request for Father Molony to assume control of St. Mary's parish fell on deaf ears not only because the

⁵⁸Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 21, 1852, p.2.

⁵⁹Though Fathers Soulerin and Malbos took vows on November 21, 1852 and Fathers Molony and Vincent did so at a later date, Father Flannery never took vows.

demands of teaching prevented it, but also for spiritual reasons. Even for Father Molony there would be a danger in living a solitary life after years of life in a community or, at least, in the Palace as the Bishop's archdeacon and associate. It was not only the request for individual Basilians to assume the duties of the external ministry that reflected the bishop's attitude; it was quite evident in the matter of vocations. In 1853 it was his policy to favour vocations to the Community only if the young aspirant pledged himself to prepare for the life of the missionary rather than that of the teacher.⁶⁰ In fact the bishop "didn't want the Basilians to build a college when there was another work more pressing."⁶¹ This negative attitude of the bishop was a very trying circumstance for the young community and had it not been for the prudent foresight of Father Soulerin the history of the Basilians in Canada might have been more brief or much different than the reality.

This negative or prohibitory attitude of the bishop was first evident toward the end of 1852; by spring, 1853, the attitude had generated into a definite policy. This period of development corresponded chronologically with the vain episcopal attempts to secure priests and the efforts to

⁶⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 13, 1853, p.2.

⁶¹Ibid., November 8, 1854, p.3.

obtain a fair Separate school settlement. It caused consternation among the Fathers as it immediately succeeded the loss of St. Mary's parish and subsequent alternative proposals of the bishop.

The later proposals of Bishop Charbonnel are contained in a letter of Father Soulerin to his Superior General in December, 1852. After being informed by Father Soulerin of the advantages, both to Community and diocese, of the establishment of a separate Basilian house, as found in American dioceses, Bishop Charbonnel, after deciding against Basilian occupancy of St. Mary's, proposed possible sites for the venture. For Father Soulerin a solid establishment was immediately necessary for the living of a religious life; such a foundation would provide an atmosphere of confidence for future Basilians. The bishop, realizing the Community's desire for security, declared: "I am not immortal, my successor may have different plans for the Palace."⁶² The proposal of a large area in the vicinity of St. Paul's Church was rejected on the grounds of its unhealthy location near a cemetery. Offering many more advantages was that section of the Elmsley property, previously offered to Father Tellier. Situated north of the Cathedral, it was within twenty minutes

⁶²Ibid., December, 1852, p.3. The actual words of the Bishop are quoted by Father Soulerin in this letter.

walking distance of Toronto. The property occupied an area of somewhat more than an acre and with the addition of a neighbouring section, would provide ample space for both college and church. Soon assuming the name of the district, Clover Hill, the Elmsley property possessed the elevation necessary for healthiness and the privacy and spaciousness necessary for a boarding college. The property on Clover Hill, which actually included four lots, was donated by Mr. Elmsley and four additional lots were purchased by the Community with funds provided from France. The details and problems connected with these transactions will be treated in their proper place, but their brief insertion at this point is intended to bring out the additional problem facing the Basilians, that is, of possessing a property but on which they could not build because of the bishop's policy.

As we have seen, one of the difficulties preventing the Community from taking positive steps in establishing a college at Clover Hill was the problem of separation. While circumstances surrounding the occupation of the Palace by the Congregation made it imperative in the eyes of Basilians that educational facilities be offered to non-aspirants, the Bishop remained adamant in his view that separation was essential: "we must withdraw the aspirants from worldly life and from those who are seeking worldly professions."⁶³

⁶³Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoni, January 7, 1854, Letter Book, p.40.

It is quite obvious that the bishop's view was the ideal and is accepted as the "sine qua non" of all major seminaries. It was the view of Father Soulerin, too, but he maintained that "the establishment of a Grand Seminary was out of the question in such circumstances as were found in the Toronto diocese."⁶⁴ Though he felt that the community scarcely possessed a staff for a Little Seminary and rather than face the prospect of the loss of the non-aspirants, Father Soulerin at first toyed with the idea of using St. Michael's College for non-aspirants and the proposed Clover Hill foundation for seminarists.⁶⁵ This was impossible, of course, because of the lack of teachers to administer two foundations.

Added to the occasional tenseness that must have developed in the Palace over the different aims, the Basilians were also subject to a very natural silent criticism from missionaries visiting the bishop. It would be impossible for these missionaries not to compare the rigours of their life with that of the five Basilians "whose work consisted in teaching latin and greek to children."⁶⁶

It was at this juncture that Father Soulerin introduced his missionary proposals. To the College and Church a

⁶⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 18, 1854, p.3.

⁶⁵Ibid., February 13, 1854, p.2.

⁶⁶Ibid., October 1, 1852, p.3.

mission for the French speaking people of the diocese in the vicinity of Penetang "would complete our work here."⁶⁷ Such an establishment would partially satisfy the hopes of the bishop and would allay any criticism emanating from the hard working missionaries. Since the foundation would include at least three members living the Basilian rule in common, spiritual dangers would be avoided. To the obvious good such an establishment could confer on the diocese, it would admit of a change of personnel during the summer vacation period, thus providing a fruitful field of endeavour for the teaching Basilians. Aspirants to the Basilian community might be increased since the Congregation could now offer another spiritual activity to the youth of the country. However, the success of the plan depended on the authorization of the Mother House at Annonay and whatever hope the Toronto Superior had of receiving three additional members was shattered when the Crimean War broke out. The effect of this war on French vocations was immediately felt and added to the "sterility of 1852 made any additional aid to the colony out of the question."⁶⁸

The bishop constantly seeking a solution to the difficult problem of securing priests, suggested a rather surprising proposition to the Community. Contained in a

⁶⁷Ibid., July 15, 1853, p.2.

⁶⁸Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Rev. J. Soulerin, July 30, 1853, p.3.

letter of Father Malbos to the Superior General, dated February 6, 1853, the episcopal proposal requested the Basilians to assume charge of the three Toronto parishes, the Cathedral, St. Paul's and St. Mary's. It was by far the most specific suggestion and, for the bishop, it was a compromise in face of the Basilians' reluctance to set up missionary centres. To the Basilians, it did present a different aspect to the old problem. Should the scheme be feasible, the question of common life would arise. Would Basilians assigned to the parishes live in the Palace or through their parochial duties, be forced to reside in the rectories? If the latter was selected what would happen to the religious life of the members? Would not the arduous duties of a pastor play havoc with any attempt to combine teaching and mission work? The Catholic population of Toronto largely Irish in background "lacked confidence in Scottish and English priests."⁶⁹ How would they accept priests whose mastery of the English tongue was, at best, imperfect?

Father Soulerin once more had to reject the bishop's request.

Subsequent letters to the Superior-General in 1853 expressed the frustrated feelings of the Fathers.

I prefer that we could keep to teaching...that doesn't appear easy in a country such as this...if our students increase we would be forcibly obliged to perform our ordinary functions and Monseigneur would complain.⁷⁰

⁶⁹Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, February 6, 1853, p. 2.

⁷⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 22, 1853, p. 3.

Added to the opposition towards the missionary role because of its inroads on teaching, was the fear such a role would have on the Community: "the big danger is that some of ours lacking taste for teaching take too much part in the external ministry."⁷¹ The spirit of acquisitiveness could easily rear itself and cause a lack of harmony among the members. It was a known fact that Father Flannery received at least fifty francs from his duties in Weston and so "there is more eagerness to go out into the parishes than would be the case in France."⁷²

There was no question that a participation in mission work to the extent requested by the bishop, would either mean the break-up of the Community or the formation of an entirely different congregation. Fully aware of these dangers, Father Soulerin began to realize the necessity of having official support for his position. In writing Father Tourvielle he asked "please recommend the attachment to our rule and duties as teachers."⁷³ This request for a directive was a very prudent one. There was no insistence that the external work be completely prohibited, as such a demand would have only served to aggravate the zealous

⁷¹Ibid., p.4.

⁷²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, August 16, 1855, p.2.

⁷³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvielle, April 9, 1853, p.2.

bishop and probably would have resulted in the same treatment for the Basilians as that accorded Father Tellier. However, the situation was rapidly reaching a climax which would require some treaty or concordat to establish, once and for all, the position of the Community in the diocese.

To show how the tenseness between the occupants of the Palace was increased we have need to examine another concurring problem. The Community was interested primarily in providing secondary education and seminary instruction; the Bishop, anxious though he was to secure priests, was, almost from his arrival in Toronto, enmeshed in the struggle to secure a just Separate elementary school system and this objective virtually obliterated for him, at least temporally, the need of providing education for the more advanced students. Beset with so many pressing difficulties, the bishop could not see why the Community attached so much gravity on what to him was of only relative importance. This partly explains his seeming indifference to the plight of the Fathers and his opposition to their quest for stability. To understand the truth of these statements and to ascertain why the Basilian position was precarious we must examine the controversy raging during the period 1850-1860...the Separate School Question.

The traditional Catholic view on education insisted on Catholic schools for Catholic children at all levels.

Once more we at first find it difficult to see why bishop and superior were not in perfect harmony rather than maintaining divergent views of separation. For non-aspirants, in the period, it was felt that the Catholic common school gave the broad, general education needed by all students;--- this was the accepted view held by Bishop Charbonnel.⁷⁴

So intent was the zealous bishop in securing the educational rights for Catholics that in his Pastoral Letter of Lent 1856, he stated: "Catholic electors in this country, who do not use their electoral power on behalf of Separate Schools are guilty of mortal sin."⁷⁵ This uncompromising attitude was based on the fear that the Catholic youth would lose its faith from attendance at the Common schools. The absence of Catholic teaching week after week, month after month could not help but result in a serious challenge to the faith of the children and coupled with the lack of priests in the diocese, it truly presented a grave problem.

So far as the school question was concerned, Bishop Charbonnel demanded two things: common Catholic schools where needed and a share in the public funds for education.

⁷⁴A common school is the modern public elementary school.

⁷⁵Bishop Charbonnel, "Pastoral Letter of Lent, 1856", article in The Catholic Mirror of Toronto, Vol. 19, January 25, 1856, p.4, col.1.

To secure these ends the bishop expended as much energy as he had in the search for priests. The Superintendent of Education, Dr. Ryerson, was opposed to these aims, completely ignoring the fact that similar rights were granted to the Protestant minority in Canada East. In 1850, Catholics had been obliged to pay for the common schools as well as the Separate ones. Laws enacted in 1853 and again in 1855 at first seemed promising from the bishop's point of view but these hopes were soon dashed, through the operation of the laws. Because local officials blocked the formation of separate schools the 1853 Act became impotent. The Tache Act of 1855 exempted separate school supporters from paying taxes for the common schools but only where separate schools existed and should separate schools be formed later the Catholic rate-payers would not be freed from their common school assessment.

So upset was Bishop Charbonnel over the Act of 1853 that he was on the point of refusing the government grant for his College. Prudent advice from Bishop Guigues of Bytown prevented this action: "I suppose by so doing you wish to remain free of action...the government in giving you a grant acts with justice...you should accept it."⁷⁶

⁷⁶Bishop Guigues, Registered Letters, Vol.6, p.134, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, May 20, 1855, p.2.

The Bishop and Catholics in general were subject to a considerable barrage of religious intolerance in their efforts to secure justice. Ryerson, in his blind infatuation for his National School System or through his hostility to the Catholic Church, indicated a spirit of intolerance and opposition to Catholic claims. His use of the words 'Romanist' and 'Romanism' was untactful; he threatened "to abolish Separate Schools altogether if Catholics kept on demanding their rights."⁷⁷ In fact Ryerson made out that every demand by the Catholics for their school rights was an attack on the integrity of the Public School system. The Superintendent, however, was greatly exceeded in his attacks by George Brown who bleated in his paper, 'The Globe': "we oppose the Church of Rome, the most grasping and tyrannical of churches, the ally of despotism in every country in which it has a foothold."⁷⁸

The school agitation continued throughout and beyond the period of Bishop Charbonnel's regime. Through the

⁷⁷J. G. Hodgins, ed., Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada from the Passing of the Constitutional Act of 1791 to the Close of Rev. Dr. Ryerson's Administration of the Education Department in 1876, Vol. 12, Toronto, Ontario Department of Education, 1894, p.34.

⁷⁸George Brown, "Again The Separate School Question," editorial in The Globe of Toronto, p. 421, October 27, 1856 p.3, col. 1.

efforts of John Elmsley of Toronto and W. R. Scott, member of the House for Ottawa City, who carried the torch after the resignation of the bishop, the fight ended successfully for Catholics in the passing of the 1863 Act. In 1867 this act was embodied in the British North American Act and guaranteed the school rights presently enjoyed by the Catholics of Ontario.

It is rather amazing, too, that virtually all the undertakings of the bishop, eminently good though they were, should have caused circumstances that greatly increased the problems or created new difficulties for the Basilian Fathers. In a letter dated July 5, 1855, just after permission had finally been granted the Basilians to build a foundation on Clover Hill and just four days prior to the actual commencement of operations, Father Soulerin bemoaned the inopportune time selected by the bishop for a diocesan financial drive in aid of a Catholic hospital. The impecunious Basilians were at first denied permission to collect in the Toronto diocese so as not to detract from the success of the hospital; this prohibition was soon repudiated in part. The diocese, except the city of Toronto, was open to the solicitation of the Basilian Fathers.⁷⁹ The exclusion of Toronto as a source of revenue, despite a later reprieve to the extent of two annual Sunday collections, was a sorry

⁷⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, July 5, 1855, p.1.

blow. A high percentage of the wealth, of the relatively poor diocese of Toronto, was found in the See City; the country areas were sparsely settled and the majority of the settlers were recent immigrants whose resources were very limited. Even if the pioneer people were financially well-to-do, it would be much more difficult to convince them of the necessity of higher Catholic educational facilities than the city-folk. However, the urban areas of Hamilton, St. Catharines, Brantford and London were among the communities open to the Fathers' canvassing and these promised fruitful returns. Even these hopes of the Community were shattered by the needs of the Bishop.

For several years Bishop Charbonnel had sought a co-adjustor to assist him in the multitude of his problems.⁸⁰ His choice fell on Father O'Dowd, a Sulpician from Montreal, but despite the episcopal influence bolstered by two supporting letters from Rome, the Sulpician priest refused to accept the dignity. Not to be denied, the bishop then attempted to reduce the size of his unwieldy diocese: in this he was successful and the dioceses of London and Hamilton were carved out of the Toronto diocese. On December 3, 1855, Father Farrell and Pinsonneault were consecrated bishops of Hamilton and London, respectively.⁸¹

⁸⁰Ibid., July 15, 1853, p.3.

⁸¹Bishop Charbonnel, Pastoral Letter, April 23, 1856, p.1. (Preserved in Archives of Archdiocese of Toronto.)

This reduction in area of the Toronto diocese naturally made the financial problem, facing the Basilians, much more grave. Many of the more lucrative centres were now in the new dioceses and therefore not subject to Basilian collections.

When Father Tourvieille submitted a circular to the bishop he congratulated him on his undertakings and especially on "the establishment of a new home for the aged - the House of Providence."⁸² It was yet another example of episcopal zeal but it increased the diocesan debt and considerably reduced any help the Community could hope to obtain.

⁸²Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, October 13, 1856, p.1.

CHAPTER II

PROBLEMS OF LOCATION AT CLOVER HILL

When Bishop Charbonnel abandoned the scheme of establishing his Little Seminary in conjunction with St. Mary's Church under Basilian control, his alternate proposal of the Clover Hill property was quickly selected by the Community. The property had been offered to the Jesuit Fathers on condition that a large educational establishment be erected and when the Society failed to accept it, the proffered land reverted back to Mr. Elmsley. However, there was an understanding between donor and bishop that the land would be available for any future episcopal undertaking.

The area comprised four lots with an extent of approximately an acre and a half and a value of 1800 louis.¹ It was situated almost directly north of the Cathedral, about twenty minutes' walking distance away and slightly beyond the Toronto city limits. Because of the topography of the Clover Hill area, the section comprised almost half a geographical unit. The remaining four lots and a house made up a total unit of some three and three-quarter acres, separated from other dwellings by trails or roads on the north

¹Closest estimates indicated that the extent of the property was 65,000 square feet. Similar estimates indicated that 1 louis was equal to twenty one francs.

and south and by a small ravine on the west. On the east the construction of a proposed new road was rumoured.

Following conferences between the bishop, Mr. Elmsley, Fathers Soulerin and Molony and an unidentified lawyer, an understanding was reached on April 9, 1853. The original four lots were donated to the "Episcopal Corporation for the use of the Basilians for as long a time as their order will exist in the city of Toronto and remain in communion with the Holy See."² The donation had to be made to the Corporation in order to conform with the law which did not recognize property donations made to priests. The Community was to have the use of the property and could not alienate it for any reason. On the other hand, the Fathers could not be dispossessed of the property, legally, so long as they remained in Toronto and were free from all taints of heresy. Should either of these eventualities occur the property was to pass to another Community after compensation was made the Basilians for any constructions and additions made by them. Mr. Elmsley also designated that the property be put to a religious purpose. Though not specifying any definite time, the construction of a church was inserted as a 'sine qua non' of the donation. This was the beginning of the Basilian foundation in Canada.

²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 9, 1853, p. 3.

The area, though over an acre in size, did not seem large enough to Father Soulerin for the construction of both a church and a college or Little Seminary with adequate space for recreation. Privacy, so lacking on Queen Street and in the Palace, must be guaranteed also. With these ends in mind the Community applied to Mr. Elmsley for the other four lots and the house. The latter was the personal possession of Mrs. Elmsley who rented it at 1000 francs a year and valued it at 20,000 francs. This price was equal to the combined worth of the other four lots and together made a total beyond the resources of the Community. Through the office of Father Polly, the bursar at Annonay, Father Soulerin obtained some 30,000 francs, more than enough to purchase the four additional lots. This territory was an outright purchase by the Community completely belonging to the Fathers who could put the area to any use. A difficulty presented itself in drawing up the contract because of the Basilian Superior's nationality. To prevent any possible alienation of the property because Father Soulerin was not a British subject, it was deemed essential that the contract be drawn up jointly under the names of Fathers Soulerin and Molony. This, too, presented a slight difficulty in that Father Molony's parents who were still living, could conceivably make some claim on the property in

the event of their son's death. To safeguard the Community from this improbability, Father Molony made a suitable declaration.³

There was more than a germ of truth in the remark of Father Soulerin on April 9, 1853: "we are now the owners of a small part of Canada."⁴ The 'small part' consisted of three and three-quarter acres, and with later minor additions extended eastwards to a point slightly beyond present-day Bay Street, westwards to a boundary approximately half way between Bay Street and Queen's Park Crescent, northwards to St. Mary Street and southwards to St. Joseph Street. That the property fulfilled the aesthetic qualities desired by the Fathers is proven by Father Malbos' statement: "this area is certainly a paradise."⁵

Needless to say the Fathers immediately busied themselves with plans for the future. According to the intention of the donor a church was to be built and thus first consideration was given to its construction: "we are of the opinion to get busy building a church at Clover Hill, partly at our expense and partly from subscriptions which we can obtain in the city."⁶ Being a distance from St.

³Ibid., p.1-3.

⁴Ibid., p.3

⁵Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.2.

⁶Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 9, 1853, p.2.

Michael's College it could serve, in time, as a place of pilgrimage or provide a suitable walk for the students. Many roseate plans for the new church, destined to be called St. Basil's, occupied the Fathers during the summer period of 1853.

By August 1853, immediate plans for the construction of the Church had to be shelved. Adequate Basilian administration of a parish was out of the question because of the needs of the bishop who "proposed to give us two or three appointments in the Palace."⁷ The needs of Bishop Charbonnel made any definite plan impossible: "sometimes he supports the idea of a church and college at Clover Hill...at another time, a wooden chapel."⁸ Moreover, another factor which had to be considered was the distance between the Basilian centre in the Palace and Clover Hill. If a Church, alone, was built the Basilians would be too far away from the parishioners to provide efficient ministerial service. Clearly, the building of a church would demand the construction of an adjoining establishment, be it college, seminary or even rectory.

When the realization of the impracticability of building a church alone became evident, the Basilians turned toward the project of planning a college as well. Despite

⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 9, 1853, p.2.

⁸Ibid., p.3.

the zeal of Father Soulerin in making plans for a new college it was a difficult business: "unfortunately the plans he makes each day crumble like a castle of cards ...he must be master of his own home before commanding."⁹ Though the Basilian superior was naturally dejected, his plans continued and they formed an important part of the communications he had with Father Tourvieille from 1853 to 1855.

Though subject to many alterations as circumstances dictated, the main ideas of the future college took shape before the end of the year 1853. Detailed information about the size of the proposed building and the location of the rooms appear in a letter sent to the Superior General on December 13, 1853. Differing from the outline of Father Tellier by reason of the fact that the Jesuit based his plans around the acquisition of the house belonging to Mrs. Elmsley, the new building at Clover Hill in the mind of Father Soulerin was to form a unit with the church required in the Agreement.¹⁰ Submitted to an architect, Mr. Hay, on December 8, 1853, the planned foundation was "found practicable but far from a thing of beauty and lacking the comforts of the schools constructed by the government."¹¹

⁹Ibid., p.1.

¹⁰The Jesuits had been required to build a school as a condition.

¹¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 13, 1853, p.3.

Running in an east-west direction, the extent of the academic and residential section of the unit was to be fifty-eight feet by forty-eight feet: there were to be three floors located over a basement, two-thirds of which was underground, according to the customs of the country. This lower part of the building was to be divided into a recreation room and refectory. The first floor was to contain a dormitory, study-hall, chapel and parlour as well as the quarters for visitors and the rooms of the superior and bursar. The parlour and chapel were adjoining and separated by a sliding door which would allow for the extension of the chapel when conditions necessitated it. The various rooms on the first floor were connected with each other by a long corridor which ran the length of the building. A staircase from this wide first floor corridor to a narrower one in the basement provided access between the two floors. The remaining parts of the building were to be connected in the same fashion. On the second floor, Father Soulerin envisioned rooms for staff and students together with linen closets and an infirmary, while a dormitory and a lavatory, to include only wash-basins, were to be located on the third floor. A small exterior building connected indirectly with the refectory was to house the servants and to provide a suitable kitchen and pantry. Latrines were situated on the opposite side of the building, adjacent to the study-hall and while no mention is made

of their construction we may presume their enclosure in some type of wooden edifice. Ample space remained for the outdoor recreation of both students and priests. The estimated price of such an establishment was placed at 2200 louis if built of brick, while an alternative price of 1400 louis was suggested for the building on condition that the upper two stories be constructed of wood rather than brick. In order to avoid any possible alteration Father Soulerin determined to put no construction on the four lots purchased from Mr. Elmsley and completely owned by the Community.¹² Gothic architecture was preferred to other forms because of its cheapness on the one hand and its grace and dignity on the other. In one of his few moments of glee, Father Soulerin proclaimed: "it will resemble an abbey of the Middle Ages."¹³

Subsequent alterations were made by both Father Tourvieille and Mr. Hay. The lavatory was placed in the basement thus allowing for an extension of the third floor dormitory; staff living-rooms were to have a uniform ten feet by ten feet measurement; the college was to be extended to a length of one hundred feet, while wings, running north and south were to be added to the eastern end of the building. A stable and a driving shed for carriages were to be located adjacent to the northern extremity of the

¹²Ibid., May 16, 1854, p.1.

¹³Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.3.

¹⁴Ibid., pp.4-5

proposed wing.¹⁴

St. Basil's Church was to run north and south and parallel to and slightly longer and wider than the wings. Connected with the western end of the college, it gave the establishment the form of the letter 'H'. In addition to this interior connection with the college, reserved for staff and students, the church could be entered by the main door at the southern extremity. The sanctuary was to be located in the northern extremity of the church.

There was a grandiose scheme mooted of making a rectangular court by enclosing the southern part of the establishment with a brick wall. The total cost of the foundation was estimated at 5000 louis, a sum that far exceeded the means of the Community. By eliminating the proposed court, from the plans, the total was reduced to 4000 louis, a very sizeable figure that was to tax the efforts of the Fathers to the utmost.

The problem that arose when the Basilians assumed control of St. Michael's College, once more presented itself as the plans for Clover Hill were being made. Should the Clover Hill school be purely a Little Seminary or should it offer educational facilities to all Catholic students?

¹⁴Ibid., pp.4-5

Writing from Annonay to the Toronto bishop, Father Tourvieille expressed the view that a pure Little Seminary was to be preferred: "what would our diocese be without Ste. Barbe and Ste. Claire."¹⁵ In the first fifty years of their existence in Annonay, these two Little Seminaries administered, like the College of Annonay, by the Basilians "produced six hundred priests while the College has only produced one-tenth of that number."¹⁶ In conclusion Father Tourvieille indicated that his view was shared by the bishop: "I believe we have always been in agreement on this point, that the separation of the students studying for Orders from those seeking other careers will be extremely useful."¹⁷

The very convincing argument of the Superior General was by his own admission based on conditions that existed in France. Despite communications, lengthy and detailed though they were, Father Tourvieille acknowledged he was "just not on the scene."¹⁸ Moreover, in analyzing his argument in favour of a pure Little Seminary, some of the original force is reduced. It is true that the ordination of six hundred young men from the two French seminaries was an edifying accomplishment. No less, however, was the

¹⁵ Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel,
March 15, 1854, Letter Book, p.58

¹⁶Ibid., p.59

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p.58

ordination of approximately sixty youths in a College whose end was the education of young men for careers which did not necessarily embrace ecclesiastical futures. Too, it was a matter of fact that those who did seek a priestly life went to the Little Seminaries, those who did not went to the College. In Annonay, there was a college and a seminary; in Toronto, such an enviable situation did not exist. The problem resolved itself into a problem of whether to have a College, similar to the one in Annonay, or to have a Little Seminary, like Ste. Barbe. If the latter was decided on, it meant that the young Catholic men seeking secular careers would be educated in a thoroughly Protestant environment; if the former was selected, there was a possible danger to the aspirants of becoming too interested in the worldly pursuits of the non-aspirants. A tangible rebuttal to this danger was the success in vocations of the Annonay College.

On arrival in Toronto, the bishop shared the traditional French idea of a pure Little Seminary, but after residing for some time in his diocese, he began to change his views because of local circumstances. In a letter to the Propaganda he outlined the source of his opposition towards the Protestant University of Toronto and since there was virtually no possibility of effecting a reform in that institution we see that his remarks indirectly

support the establishment of a Catholic institution of higher learning. The only educators capable of such an enterprise who had ever evinced a willingness to live in his diocese were the Basilian Fathers whose acquisition of Clover Hill foreshadowed the probable erection of a Little Seminary. A complete separation of two establishments, one a Little Seminary and the other a classical college could not be realized by the bishop from the simple reason of lack of man-power. Future assistance from other Communities or the Basilians in France could not be reasonably expected. Of the University of Toronto he wrote:

degrees are granted to Catholics if they reject their faith...Catholics are excluded from burses...they follow courses determined by the state and are instructed in history and philosophy by Protestants...nine-tenths of the students and nineteen-twentieths of the professors are Protestants.¹⁹

The views of Father Soulerin were in keeping with those of his General: "we are above all a Seminary."²⁰ However, his notions like those of his bishop began to change as time progressed. While still holding for the strict interpretation of a Little Seminary he, nevertheless, accepted the Brothers' students at the time of their expulsion from the Palace in February, 1853. The local circumstances influenced him as well as "the arguments of his

¹⁹Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoni, May 30, 1853, Letter Book, p.38.

²⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 14, 1853, p.3.

four confrères."²¹ However by February, 1854, Father Soulerin was "tempted to take only aspirants."²² In ordinary conditions a temptation is some suggestion to do or reflect on something contrary to one's right reason. The obvious reason for this change was that "the students might be tempted to go to Protestant schools."²³ Protestant schools were pretty well considered, at the best, exceedingly dangerous to the faith of Catholic students.

Circumstances which made impossible the effective administration of two distinct establishments, separated by a considerable distance, would not necessarily prevent the housing of the two institutions in the one building at Clover Hill. Actually a modified form of this had been carried on in St. Michael's College since the departure of the Christian Brothers. Writing in early January, 1854, the bishop mentioned: "of the thirty-six students enrolled, twenty are for Sacred Orders."²⁴ In the Clover Hill institution it would be a comparatively easy matter to separate the secular students from the seminarians: should there be

²¹Ibid., November 21, 1853, p.2.

²²Ibid., February 13, 1854, p. 1.

²³Ibid., p.3.

²⁴Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoni, January 7, 1854, Letter Book, p.41.

a lack of teachers, it would not be difficult to arrange for the employment of some of the more advanced theologians in a teaching capacity for the younger students. This was the plan, slightly altered, that was ultimately adopted with the consent of the bishop who only sought to "guard the precious seeds, withdrawing them from worldly life."²⁵

It would be incorrect to omit one other consideration that prompted the Community to try to harmonize the views of the Superior General with the circumstances unique in Canada. Writing in what he considered to be a practical, down-to-earth, financial view, Father Malbos informed the General about the insecurity of maintaining a pure Little Seminary. An incident in the St. Louis archdiocese prompted Father Malbos' line of thought. Of some eighty candidates at the Missouri Little Seminary, "not one persevered."²⁶ Realizing the enormous financial sacrifices that Bishop Charbonnel was making for the maintenance of St. Michael's College, the bursar predicted: "the bishop will scarcely be able to continue his sacrifice if we should have poor results."²⁷ A combined College and Seminary would enable

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 23, 1853, p.2.

²⁷Ibid., p.3.

the Community to make expenses and would not be a charge on the diocese. In this way the future of the Community, even its continuance in Toronto as a religious congregation, would not be, in large part, dependent on the success of the Little Seminary. Keenly aware of the obstacles confronting the bishop and of the rapid alteration of his policy, of which the replacement of the Christian Brothers was but one example, Father Malbos championed the adoption of a Seminary admitting worldly career-minded Catholic boys.

The views of Father Malbos were in defence of the policy adopted at St. Michael's College. In April, 1853, the possibility of building an edifice at Clover Hill seemed remote to the bursar. That his arguments referred solely to the Palace institution can be gleaned from his letter of May, 1854. In this letter he gives his views on the implausibility of having "two establishments with two complements of teachers."²⁸ Strangely, the idea of combining both institutions under one roof had not occurred to him. Now, as bursar, the cost of supporting two establishments or of trying to provide two staffs seemed to him beyond possibility. Consequently, Father Malbos began to display a rather surprising reversal of policy regarding the new foundation: "we came for a Seminary only."²⁹ Perhaps his ideas

²⁸Ibid., May, 1854. p.2.

²⁹Ibid.

only served to indicate that Father Soulerin had altered his policy to support a non-pure Little Seminary. It was becoming increasingly evident that Superior and bursar usually disagreed on everything. Father Malbos himself refers to an injunction received from the General: "to keep quiet with my everlasting criticism of Father Soulerin, so that some form of harmony might prevail."³⁰

It is certainly correct to say that circumstances played a very important part in the establishment of Clover Hill as an institution for both aspirants to the priesthood and non-aspirants. When Clover Hill eventually opened its doors it was to receive both kinds of students. This could never have been done without the approbation of the Bishop and Fathers Tourvieille and Soulerin.

Without attempting to compare the qualities of Canadian and French students at this point, one remark of Father Soulerin may be noted which, undoubtedly, led him to feel that a College composed of aspirants and non-aspirants was a distinct possibility in Toronto: "we have no need for a house like Ste. Barbe considering the small number of our students and their good spirit."³¹ We can only conclude that in 1853, at least, the character of the non-aspirants

³⁰Ibid., June 25, 1854, p.1.

³¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 22, 1853, p.2.

at the Palace was of such a nature that it precluded any danger to the vocations of the seminarians.

As the time passed between April, 1853, and the actual commencement of construction in July, 1855, the minds of the Basilian Fathers were filled with uncertainties of many types. Added to the frustration engendered by the problem of building was the gnawing realization that, if a foundation was ever to be established, such an undertaking must be accomplished in the very near future. Reasons for building immediately on the Clover Hill were quite apparent but the obstacles, too, were fairly evident. Realizing the tremendous zeal of the people of Canada East, Father Soulerin was led to conclude: "Lower Canada is so flourishing religiously--it must be in great part due to the wonderful schools founded from the beginning of colonization."³² To the little band of intrepid Basilians who had sacrificed so much for their adopted mission country, this was an aspiring and logical reason to begin construction as rapidly as possible. Together with this motive of zeal, stark practical reasons for building soon were in evidence. Toronto was a fast growing centre. After only thirteen months' residence, Father Malbos claimed that: "it has increased by 10,000 since our arrival."³³ Though we may feel inclined to

³²Ibid., April, 5, 1855, p.1.

³³Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.2.

attribute this figure to a bursar's natural tendency toward exaggeration, there is no doubt that the Queen City was experiencing growing pains: "there is no such centre in this vast diocese where the population increases so rapidly."³⁴

In proportion to the increase of population there was a similar increase in construction. In the year 1853, besides numerous dwellings, the construction of the Anglican Cathedral, four Protestant churches and a hospital all gave proof of the material development of Toronto.³⁵ By 1855, Father Soulerin wrote: "there is not a single vacant structure."³⁶ The price of labour, land and materials was increasing very rapidly also. Four months after purchasing the four lots at Clover Hill, their value doubled.³⁷ Construction costs increased mainly because "materials are always going up in price."³⁸ It is interesting to note that the Palace extension, which cost the bishop 24,000 francs, had an estimated value of 50,000 francs by 1855.³⁹

From an impartial consideration of the situation in Toronto only one conclusion could be drawn: "it is my opinion

³³Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille,
September 20, 1853, p.2.

³⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille,
April 5, 1855, p.1.

³⁵Ibid., December 13, 1853, p.1.

³⁶Ibid., April 5, 1855, p.1.

³⁷Ibid., December 13, 1853, p.1.

³⁸Ibid., April 5, 1855, p.2.

³⁹Ibid., p.1.

that we shouldn't delay, if we can build."⁴⁰ Each day the price of articles, necessary for construction, increased with alarming rapidity. The influx of settlers meant that the risks and perils connected with such a huge undertaking, as a church and college, were reduced, while the increase of prices made imperative an immediate start on construction.

Obviously, too, a new establishment would solve the problem of separation: "the temporal and spiritual good of our Community demands separation."⁴¹ The immediate difficulties, previously considered, that faced the Basilians in the Palace had not been alleviated. In fact, they were increased by the realization, in mid 1853, that the large tract of land owned by the Community served only as a terminus for walks or as a basis for idyllic dreams. The spiritual and temporal defects of the Palace occupancy were succinctly summed up by Father Soulerin: "here we scarcely remain at peace---we are always too hot or too cold."⁴² The alternative to a non-building program and the consequent failure to achieve separation did not present a very cheerful picture to the Community. At least Father Malbos felt that in that eventuality "some other community would build and we will

⁴⁰Ibid., December 13, 1853, p.1.

⁴¹Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.3.

⁴²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 5, 1855, p.2.

return to France or be secularized."⁴³ On the other hand, a foundation in Toronto could provide a place of refuge should conditions in France make the continued residence of the Basilians there precarious. Father Soulerin could have been looking into the future when he espoused the cause of immediate construction: "a college and a parish will be a good acquisition for the Community--we do not know what Providence can allow in France; even if there were fifteen priests here, they could be looked after."⁴⁴

While the five Basilians were united in their desire for an establishment there was, at first, some division over what should be constructed: "Father Soulerin wants a church on Clover Hill---we four want a college and then the faithful will help us with the church."⁴⁵ It was only in December, 1853, that Father Soulerin did agree that a parish, without resident clergy, would be impractical.⁴⁶

In spite of the good reasons militating for quick action, the Community foresaw minor disadvantages and, of course, the conflicting aims of the zealous bishop. We cannot attach too much credence to the view that a two and a half

⁴³Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.2.

⁴⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 13, 1853, p.3.

⁴⁵Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.2.

⁴⁶Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 13, 1853, p.1.

year period was required for planning when Father Soulerin writes of a hospital and an Anglican Cathedral, certainly complex and exacting in their execution, being constructed in a matter of months from the time of their conception.⁴⁷ Nor can we hold that the Superior General was in opposition, in view of the fact that Annonay contributed 30,000 francs for purposes of purchasing the four lots and for construction. A further loan of 20,000 francs, while not relieving the material problem to any great extent, did however, indicate the complete support of the Mother House in the matter of construction. The total cost of construction was estimated at a minimum of 4,000 louis, or 84,000 francs, and the Community in Toronto could count on only 38,000 francs, which had to be repaid to Annonay. Despite this heavy debt, the problem cannot be considered a deterrent to building in face of the unanimous request for immediate construction by the Basilian community both in France and in Toronto.⁴⁸

It was around the needs of the bishop that the crux of the problem revolved: "he is the administrator, we follow his ideas."⁴⁹ His views on the Basilians' residence in the Palace remained unaltered all during 1853. On the one hand,

⁴⁷Ibid., p.2.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp.2-4. This letter contains an excellent account of the financial situation facing the Toronto community.

⁴⁹Ibid., February 13, 1854, p.1.

he viewed the Congregation with a paternal interest. "I want you solidly established."⁵⁰ On the other hand, the vacating of the Palace, by the Fathers, did not seem in complete accord with the good of the diocese: "I understand that the bishop in leaving us here does not want us to build a College---he has so many other works which appear more pressing."⁵¹

In the end the bishop was induced to agree with the desires of the Community largely through three factors. Living in close proximity with the Congregation in the Palace, Bishop Charbonnel could not have helped but notice the growing restlessness of the Fathers and on one occasion remarked to the superior: "do you believe that these small troubles which you have now will be relieved by moving out of my house?"⁵² This restlessness was expressed by the superior: "my position becomes sad even in the midst of confreres because of their repugnance toward living in this house."⁵³ Though no records exist to substantiate this conclusion it can be reasonably held that the bishop could not have overlooked the possible departure of the Fathers from his diocese. It certainly would not have been a novel experience for the bishop to witness his priests returning to their native

⁵⁰ Ibid., December, 1852, p.2. This quotation of the bishop was referred to by Father Soulerin.

⁵¹ Ibid., November 8, 1854, p.2.

⁵² Ibid., p.3.

⁵³ Ibid., p.2.

European dioceses.⁵⁴ It is probable to conclude that the bishop felt that separation might solve the frustration of the Fathers particularly since Father Soulerin writes: "I have told Monseigneur everything I can or believe to get him to give us a separate house."⁵⁵

In addition to Bishop Charbonnel's charity and interest in the well-being of the Fathers, his debts had been considerably reduced by 1854. In a letter to the President of the Propagation of the Faith, the bishop recorded: "I finished paying what remained on the seminary."⁵⁶ To accomplish this required some stringent measures. In conformity with the dictates of the Council of Quebec of 1853, each parish was assessed one tenth of its collections. In addition the diocesan priests agreed to donate the annual government grant of 10,000 francs to the missions as well as the proceeds of two annual collections to the Seminary. These arrangements were made at the priests' retreat during the summer of 1853.⁵⁷ The fears of financial chaos were thus by early 1854, largely reduced.

⁵⁴Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoni, May 30, 1853, Letter Book, p.38. A reference to some fifteen priests who returned to their native dioceses between 1850-1852.

⁵⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 8, 1854, p.2.

⁵⁶Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoui, January 7, 1854, Letter Book, p.40.

⁵⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.3.

It was above all, however, around the growing student body that the bishop was alarmed. The Palace, in late 1853, had reached its maximum enrollment and the superior felt that "if the numbers increase the bishop might leave us the entire Palace and move to a new house."⁵⁸ When the student total increased by February 1854, the bishop felt "that fifty-three students in his Palace are already too many and that is why he would like to see us go."⁵⁹

With prudence, Father Soulerin made overtures to the bishop regarding separation: "the first time I spoke of a concordat he said he already had made some conventions with us---but I believe that Monseigneur is willing to make a concordat."⁶⁰ Before any change could be possible the Community realized that some treaty or concordat should be agreed on with the bishop. It was not so much a matter of binding Bishop Charbonnel but of building for the future and establishing a binding force which later bishops would recognize.

Father Malbos, once the ardent supporter for separation, now indicated the advantages of remaining in the Palace. Realizing the bishop could give no financial assistance to the new establishment, the bursar noted that only:

⁵⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 21, 1853, p.2.

⁵⁹Ibid., February 13, 1854, p.2.

⁶⁰Ibid., April 18, 1854, p.1.

"eight of our sixty boys are capable of paying anything."⁶¹
No doubt financial assistance would be forthcoming for the seminarians of this group, but the non-aspirants could threaten to place the new foundation in the position of financial jeopardy. Since Father Malbos felt that two groups of teachers would be needed in the new establishment, one for college and one for the seminary, the question of a teaching personnel loomed largely in his mind.⁶² Without referring to any specific cause, the bursar insinuated that there was a danger of invasion by the United States and this factor made construction a rather precarious undertaking.⁶³

The disadvantages brought up by the bursar were not irrelevant by any means, but they were not particularly difficult to refute. Certainly there was a risk in building in view of the poverty of the majority of the student body. Nevertheless the possibility of getting a government grant was not impossible: recourse could be made to the Propagation of the Faith and then too, the bishop could be expected to assist in some way. So far as the teaching personnel was concerned, the problem would not be increased by a shift from one location to another. A larger student

⁶¹Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, May, 1854, p.2.

⁶²Ibid., p.3.

⁶³Ibid., p.4.

body did present a problem in this regard but remaining in the Palace was not the solution. The threat of an American invasion of Canada had been recorded before in the annuals of Canadian history but the year 1854 ushered in a brief period of good Canadian-American relations, the result of the Reciprocity Treaty.

The views of Father Malbos showed a marked disregard for some of the advantages of the new location. Ignored were the large areas that could be devoted to recreational pursuits, as well as the land elevation which argued well for salutary conditions in Clover Hill. Ignored, too, were two rather obvious factors that would help in solving the financial troubles. The growing prosperity of the city, reflected in the increases in prices and labour, could not help but improve the financial conditions of the parents of both aspirants and non-aspirants. Equally obvious was the logical result of the erection of St. Basil's Church. Even after one-tenth of the collections were contributed to the diocese the proceeds of a parish located on the outskirts of a rapidly growing community would help greatly in reducing the debt on the foundation.

After the many months of uncertainty it was with a rather justifiable pride that Father Soulerin wrote: "the bishop has approved the house and church which will be made

of brick."⁶⁴ The first permanent foundation of the Basilian Fathers in Canada was at last to be realized and the need of a concordat was now apparent.

⁶⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille,
August 8, 1854, p.1.

CHAPTER III

PROBLEM OF THE CONCORDAT

The acceptance by the bishop of the plans of the new foundation was, in matter of fact, pretty much a formality. It was by granting episcopal consent to the drawing up of a concordat, in April, 1854, that the bishop made possible the departure of the Community from the Palace. It was to the pressing problem of a good concordat that Father Soulerin now applied himself: "I desire that everything be so clear, so perfectly defined, that never can anyone complain of anything."¹ While the superior, like the bursar, realized the futility of expecting any sizeable monetary assistance from the Ordinary, he knew that Bishop Charbonnel "was well disposed to the Community."² It was the goal of Father Soulerin to establish the Basilians solidly for the future, subject to no whim or caprice of circumstances. He, like so many others, was well aware of the adage that "good intentions can be forgotten; what is written remains."³

It was at the first conference on the concordat between bishop and superior that Father Soulerin learned of both the generosity and the business acumen of Bishop

¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 4, 1854, p.1.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

Charbonnel. Pressed though he was, the bishop immediately agreed to pay the five per cent interest on the 30,000 franc loan made by the Annonay Fathers. At first he refused to do anything else in the way of positive help but on April 17, 1854, and after some reflection the bishop agreed "to put the foundation in our charge."⁴ This, of course, did not mean outright ownership but rather the right to administer the house subject to episcopal control in matters of finance. The board of the seminarists was set at twenty louis per year and was to be paid by the bishop. The payment of the professors' salaries was to be the responsibility of the Community. The revenues of the proposed Church were to accrue to the Congregation, less of course the one-tenth tithe. This tithe would not be taken by the bishop if accounts showed that resources were not sufficient.⁵

In these arrangements the bishop kept to his policy of making no outright grant for construction purposes. The superior argued for a twenty-five louis tuition fee so that school articles, such as necessary books, might be obtained. In reply the bishop inferred that this increase was a possibility only after actual needs could be determined more accurately. Regarding the question of professors no limit was placed on the number to be employed. Should the

⁴Ibid., April 18, 1854, p.1.

⁵Ibid. These arrangements are specifically stated in this letter.

administration be in the hands of the bishop the introduction of a larger staff might be a difficult matter. The tuition charged for non-aspirants would be a matter of Basilian policy.

Armed with these premises Father Soulerin was advised "to ask Father Tourvieille to draw up the Concordat himself."⁶ The bishop, while reasoning that the Community was more keenly aware of its needs than he, would naturally subject the Concordat to a close scrutiny.

According to instructions, the Toronto superior forwarded the information to his Superior-General. In addition, Father Soulerin inserted some of his own views and suggestions as a guide. In the matter of the Church, he proposed that its direction be under the control of the superior of the house, just as "classes in the college, even though they are not prepared by a curé but a professor."⁷ It was the superior's desire to maintain the unity of the Community members which he felt might be shaken by a division of power. Realizing the necessity of having suitably qualified teachers for both Little Seminary and College, Father Soulerin held that "this was a major problem."⁸ The retention of theologians in a teaching capacity for some time after their ordination

⁶Ibid., p.2.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

might be a solution and this proposal had the added merit of meeting with episcopal approval. The question of which property, the donated or the purchased, was to be used for the establishment indicated the acumen of Father Soulerin. It was, at first, presumed by Father Tourvieille that the purchased section would be utilized.⁹ However, the Toronto superior showed a prudent foresight in his preference for the donated area. Here "we will be re-imbursed for any construction or any improvement."¹⁰ It would mean an almost irreparable financial loss to the Community, if for any reason, the Fathers should depart and receive no compensation for their establishment. This would result if the structure was built on the purchased land. Another advantage, though of less import, was that the donated land had a higher elevation than the purchased section and thus might be expected to provide a more healthy atmosphere.

The financial arrangement was not ignored by Father Soulerin. He advised Father Tourvieille to propose that all funds destined for the Seminary, through collections or the clergy donation, be deposited immediately with the Basilian bursar. Should the funds remain in the hands of the bishop some other worthy purpose might benefit. The needs

⁹Ibid., p.3.
¹⁰Ibid.

of the missionary priests were great and the superior felt they might be apprehensive if their contributions remained in the bishop's fund. The superior concluded his remarks with an admonition regarding exterior ministerial work: "the bishop must not, as he has done, employ any of the teachers in exterior functions unless the superior believes he can be charged with it."¹¹

In a letter to the bishop at the end of May, 1854, Father Tourvieille indicated that he had spent considerable time working on the proposed Concordat and that it would be forthcoming shortly.¹² Modifications and changes were certainly to be expected.

Now that permission for separation had been secured, and while awaiting the arrival of the Concordat, the Toronto Superior turned his attention to the financial problem connected with the huge undertaking. Almost 3000 louis had to be obtained, as well as the payment of 1000 louis owing to Annonay. The bishop proposed that an immediate loan of 2000 louis be assumed and he "pledged verbally to give the 120 louis of interest."¹³ Arriving in August, 1854,

¹¹Ibid., p. 4.

¹²Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, May 29, 1854, p.1.

¹³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, August 8, 1854, p.2.

Father Tourvieille's projected plan was in article form.¹⁴ The first four articles were of a financial nature. After emphasizing that all risks entailed in the construction of the foundation were to be the responsibility of the Congregation, as were the salaries of the professors and employees, the project directed that the bishop be obligated to pay for the board of ecclesiastical aspirants. A request that the one-tenth tithe on Church collections be retained by the Community was inserted. While the fee for non-aspirants was to be determined by the Toronto Fathers, no specific amount for the aspirants was demanded from the bishop. Conscious of the contrary opinions on the aspirants' tuition held by superior and bishop, the Superior General

¹⁴The entire Concordat documentation consists of five manuscripts. The first one was written by Father Tourvieille and though undated, was received by the bishop, no later than August 8, 1854. To this the bishop added the reasons for the necessity of a Concordat. The second document written by Bishop Charbonnel on November 28, 1854, included his modifications of the first manuscript. The third document was the final Concordat. It was issued from the Episcopal Palace in Toronto on January 28, 1855. The fourth manuscript was identical with the third and was Father Tourvieille's acceptance of the Bishop's plan. The fifth document dated November 1, 1855, contained some slight revisions by the bishop, a result of his displeasure at the proposed desire of the Basilians to extend their work to the Sandwich area. All these documents are contained in the Basilian archives in Toronto. The first three manuscripts make up the first three appendices: for the obvious reason, the fourth manuscript is omitted from the appendix while the fifth manuscript is listed as the fourth appendix.

did not want to include a specific figure. On the one hand, if he indicated twenty louis, it would make any argument of Father Soulerin for an increase useless, and on the other hand, if twenty-five louis were demanded it might only serve to antagonize the bishop. While not referring to collections, the project designated the Basilian econome as controller of all funds destined for Seminary use. A yearly reckoning to the bishop by the econome was required.

In conformity with the desires of Father Soulerin, the project defined the position of the pastor of the Church. He was to receive his powers and faculties from the bishop but like any Basilian professor he was to be under the direct jurisdiction of the superior. The suggestions of Father Soulerin were also evident in the articles regarding external ministerial work and the employment of ordained theologians as teachers. The bishop was to use only those Basilians in missionary work that were designated by the superior. Should missionary work interfere with teaching the superior was to have the power to deny episcopal requests. The period of teaching for the mature, ordained theologians was to be a six-year period. In addition the project included the bishop's desire for some seminarians' assistance in the Cathedral, on Sundays and holy days. The project concluded with a request that

perfect liberty of conscience be accorded those who desired to enter the Community.

The plan of Father Tourvieille was a model of firmness and tact. In matters seemingly beyond the powers of the Toronto superior, such as the external ministry, vocations and the subordination of pastor to superior, the Superior-General was definite and exact in his demands, leaving no room for compromise. So far as financial matters were concerned he used a remarkable prudence in not antagonizing the bishop with untactful demands. In allowing Father Soulerin who was on the scene to negotiate these arrangements, he avoided the pitfalls which might have caused disaster. It would be very difficult for the bishop to object to any of the definite articles, not only because of their justice but because of the leeway afforded him in the financial articles.

Because of the omission of any specific demands in the financial articles, the project by its nature required revision.

In early August, 1854, we are informed that Father Tourvieille's project had been received by the Toronto bishop: "I have only one word to say of your concordat--he has approved of it but will make some modifications."¹⁵

¹⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, August 8, 1854, p.2.

Bishop Charbonnel's first action was to add the reasons for the necessity of a new Basilian foundation. After praising the work of the Community, the bishop indicated that a new establishment was necessary for the perpetuity of the Congregation in Canada. Stressing the limited potentialities of the Palace and the likely reaction of future bishops to a school-within-a-home, Bishop Charbonnel agreed to pledge himself and his successors to the terms of a Concordat with the Basilian Community.¹⁶ The episcopal plan of November 28, 1854, naturally revolved around the articles devoted to finances. The choir school and the employment of theologians in a teaching capacity also suffered revision.

In the matter of finance the bishop agreed to place two-thirds of the Seminary funds in the hands of the Basilian econome but demanded an account from him every three months. In addition Bishop Charbonnel agreed to increase the aspirant fee to twenty-five louis a year and this was to cover all expenses connected with furnishings and books. All Seminary grants and collections were to be made to the Community only so long as the needs of the Fathers warranted them.

Provision was made enabling the bishop to have at

¹⁶This addition of Bishop Charbonnel to Father Soulerin's projected Concordat is also in the Basilian Archives, Toronto.

his disposal some ten or twelve boys for cathedral services on Sundays and Holy days.

The Basilian superior could determine the number of professors required. Theologians designated by the Superior for teaching duties were to remain in that capacity for a period of six years after their ordination.

Included in the funds to be at the disposal of the Community was the grant of 350 louis which the diocesan priests had donated for the Seminary. However only two-thirds of this amount was to be placed at the disposal of the Basilian econome by the November plan. While this did not alter Father Tourvieille's project, which contained no reference to a grant, it did disconcert Father Soulerin, who understood that the entire grant was to be ceded to the Community.¹⁷ Moreover the conditions attached to the grant were far from satisfactory to the Superior. It would be difficult to decide when the needs of the community ceased and "this difficulty could lead to embarrassment."¹⁸ On the presentation of his dissatisfaction Father Soulerin received a counter proposal. In place

¹⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, August 8, 1854, p.3. The superior mentioned that the full grant of 300 louis would be given to the Community.

¹⁸Ibid., November 4, 1854, p.1.

of the two-thirds of 350 louis with its conditions, the Basilians could accept two-thirds of the actual amount of the grant received by the bishop from the contributing diocesan priests. The alternative, in all probability, would be much less than the fixed rate established by the original proposal. The diocese was about to be divided with a consequent reduction of the government grant: moreover, there was always the possibility that some missionary priests might feel their own need necessitated retention of their shares of the grant. Aware of these risks, Father Soulerin rejected the counter proposal of Bishop Charbonnel and brought the problem of ownership of the foundation to his attention.

While the Community owned the land and would be responsible for the construction of the foundation, no specific reference to the Community ownership of the buildings had been inserted in the Concordat. To prevent any future embarrassment in this matter, Father Soulerin wished to have the situation clarified. At first, the bishop was reluctant to consider the problem as it had not been mentioned in the concordat but he finally agreed to Basilian ownership on condition that the Community accede to the request of providing twelve mature boys each Sunday to assist at the Cathedral services.¹⁹

¹⁹Ibid.,

The modified plan of Bishop Charbonnel was acceptable to Fathers Tourvieille and Soulerin in all matter save the indefiniteness of the grant and the intention of the bishop to collect the one-tenth tithe from the church collections. Overtures were fruitless: "it is useless to insist, his ideas are modified easily but he will never modify the grant or tithe."²⁰

Early in 1855 it became certain that the diocese of Toronto would be greatly reduced in size. While this would lessen the tremendous responsibilities of the bishop it also meant that his revenues would be diminished. With this in mind, before he framed the final draft, Bishop Charbonnel determined to place the grant on a sliding scale based on the number of students. Two-thirds of the grant would be given annually so long as the student body remained under fifty in number. For every student over fifty the grant was to be reduced by ten louis. While this arrangement was to be to the financial advantage of the bishop it increased the risks of the Community. With the distinct possibility of a reduced seminarian grant, a result of the diminution of the diocese, the position of the Fathers would indeed be precarious. If the number of the students sank below fifty there was no proportionate

²⁰Ibid., January 28, 1855. p. 2.

increase of the grant. To increase the perilousness of the situation the bishop decided to grant one half of the two annual seminary collections to the Fathers.

To put the Community on a more firm financial footing became the chief aim of Father Soulerin. In a conference with the bishop, just prior to the final draft, the Basilian superior made two requests. First, he proposed that some provision be made for the Community in case of a small student body. Secondly, he asked for the elimination of the intended episcopal scrutiny of Basilian finances. Bishop Charbonnel gave little satisfaction to either proposal. So far as grant increases were concerned the bishop vaguely stated that "we could count on him before we attained fifty students as much as after we had exceeded seventy-five."²¹ That such was the intention of the bishop was unquestioned, but he rejected the further proposal of Father Soulerin to include this intention in the Concordat.

It was the intention of the business-like bishop always "to have a vigilance over finances and custody of our accounts."²² This was far from meeting with the wholehearted approval of the superior, who cited the example of

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid. p.3.

other communities in other dioceses to support his plea. To this, however, the bishop remained adamant. It was not a very important problem as, in practice, the bishop was "very lenient and seldom bothered the communities."²³

From the letters of Father Soulerin we can appreciate his desired financial Concordat alterations. The grant, the collections and the twenty-five louis tuition fee were not stable enough structures to build a large establishment. The collections would be comparatively small in face of the division of the diocese and the intention of the bishop to retain half for himself. Since the amount of the collections depended on the efforts that the bishop and the missionary priests made in promoting them, it was definitely a risk. As for the government grant to the priests, there was always the chance that it might be cancelled by the missionaries. In addition, these grants were to be made only so long as necessity demanded. By means of his frequent examination of Basilian financial affairs the bishop was in a good

²³ Ibid., p.4. In this section of the letter, we are informed that the Sisters of St. Joseph built their novitiate against Bishop Charbonnel's wishes. Despite this, the bishop continued to visit them frequently on the best of terms.

position to determine whether necessity existed or not.

It would not be enough for the bishop to agree to pay twenty-five louis for each seminarian he sent to the College, as it was possible that he might only send two or three a year because of the greater appeal of the Grand Seminary at Montreal. Moreover the possibility that some of his seminarians might leave Clover Hill before taking Holy Orders might carry considerable influence with the bishop. The retention by the Community of all the Church revenues would contribute a great deal to the reduction of the financial risks. However it was the intention of the bishop to extract his tithe to which he had a definite legal right. Since the other churches of the diocese, paying the tithe, were paid for by the bishop and since St. Basil's was being constructed at the expense of the Community, Father Soulerin felt that the tithe should be dispensed with, in favour of the Basilians. Unable to change the views of the bishop, Father Soulerin was filled with mixed emotions, exultant over the developments which made possible a separate Basilian foundation, yet dejected and a little fearful over the risks and perils connected with the undertaking. At the time of the final draft of the Concordat he was more dejected and wrote: "the

bishop wants to do something good but not the essential--- e
will not consent to leave the grants indefinitely nor re-
nounce his title."²⁴

The final draft of the Concordat was issued by Bishop Charbonnel, January 28, 1855. Very similar to the projected draft of November 28, 1854, the final one included two additional articles dealing with episcopal visitation and the matter of Basilian vocations.²⁵ It was according to the regulations of the Council of Trent that the Ordinary visit communities subject to diocesan law and to inspect their temporal and spiritual progress. This regulation was inserted in the Concordat by the bishop. In the matter of vocations the bishop not only promised perfect liberty to all who professed a desire to join the Congregation but also agreed "to look at these vocations as a great blessing."²⁶ There were also two alterations in the Concordat. The length of employment of ordained seminarians at Clover Hill was reduced from six years to three years and the registration of Basilian finances was to be made to the bishop only once or twice a year.²⁷

The addition of the visitation clause in the Concordat was a minor matter and its inclusion seems scarce-

²⁴Ibid., p.5.

²⁵of. Appendix 3, p.227.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

necessary. The lack of any reference to a stipulated time or the number of visits indicates this. Since the Community was teaching seminarians, fairly frequent visits by the bishop were to be expected. The strict financial inspection of Basilian finances implied close relations between bishop and Community also.

Permission to foster Basilian vocations with episcopal approval and encouragement was a very great boon to the Community. The question of vocations then, as always, was a matter of serious importance to the Basilians. Lack of them resulted in a worrisome problem which was only slightly assuaged by permission to employ ordained seminarians in the class-rooms. Moreover at a time when the Bishop needed priests so badly for the needs of the diocese, his promise of complete liberty to all interested in joining the Community was an indication of Bishop Charbonnel's generosity and prudence. Above all the article was a safeguard for the future with bishops who might not look on the Community with friendly eyes.

The needs of the bishop for missionaries was reflected in his decision to reduce the teaching period of the seminarians to three years after their ordination, while the influence of Father Soulerin was responsible for the extension of the time between episcopal examinations of Basilian accounts.

With the official publication of the Concordat a milestone in Basilian history had been passed. The Community was a separate entity instead of a group of hired teachers who lived in the episcopal palace and acted in any missionary capacity at the behest of the bishop. Once Clover Hill was established the Basilians could lead their lives amid surroundings more suitable for religious than within the busy walls of the Palace. Frustration, engendered among the Fathers as a result of their residence in the palace, would in all probability be replaced by more harmonious relations.

The many advantages of Clover Hill with its healthy atmosphere, privacy and ample recreation areas for the students were now to be realized. It was felt, too, that the added security resulting from the possession of a foundation would prove more fruitful in attracting vocations, than the Palace where a Basilian autonomy was all but out of the question. Above all the Concordat meant security--security for the five Basilians in Toronto and their successors--security, too, for the Community members in France, who since the outbreak of the French Revolution were conscious of the possibility of some religious or political persecution.

While the Concordat stipulated the minimum episcopal assistance, it did not prohibit the bishop from

making additional gifts. That he did so, is evident from the revisions to the final draft, issued November 1, 1855. During the year 1855 the bishop had bestowed 21,848 francs or just about 1000 louis on the Basilian community.²⁸ Made up of the grant, tuition fees, church revenues and an outright gift of 250 louis, the total indicated the good will of the bishop.²⁹ However the revision draft was not designed primarily to give witness of the bishop's generosity, but rather to evince his dissatisfaction on hearing of the interest expressed by the Community in Sandwich College. "I heard that the College of Sandwich would be formed from St. Michael's against my will."³⁰

Though a consideration of Basilian expansion in the Sandwich area at Assumption College forms part of a later section, it is interesting to note that the first reference to this development comes from Bishop Charbonnel. How he obtained this information is surprising as no Basilian letters contain any mention of Assumption College before 1857. The actual appointment of Father Malbos as superior of the Sandwich College in 1857, together with

²⁸cf. Appendix 4, p.228

²⁹Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 25, 1855, p.2. The gift of 250 louis was in actuality only a part of the government grant made for St. Michael's College, to the bishop.

³⁰cf. Appendix 4, p.228

the Bishop's reference 1855, indicates that some overtures had been made by Father Pinsonneault of Montreal, later to be consecrated Bishop of London, and the Basilians, even before St. Michael's had been opened.

Though a certain vagueness characterized the manner in which the Toronto bishop gleaned his information, his reaction was clothed in exact and clear terms; his disapproval was evident by his "decision to suppress the annual grant, but not the collections."³¹

The action of the bishop came as a severe blow to the Community. Not only did it increase the risk and gamble connected with building and operating a new foundation but it implied the possibility of strained relations with Bishop Charbonnel. It was proof that even the most binding of Concordats could be broken at episcopal desire. Granting that the Community did intend to expand, was not such an expansion a laudable enterprise? Though it did not conflict with any term of the Concordat, it would establish a future foundation in a section of the Toronto diocese, soon to be separated from Bishop Charbonnel's jurisdiction. In short, it conflicted with the bishop's need for priests.

³¹Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

FINANCIAL PROBLEMS AT CLOVER HILL

The cost of the foundation at Clover Hill was a matter of grave importance to the Fathers. During the first two years of Basilian residence in Toronto, a reckoning showed that the Community possessed, besides personal articles, only 130 louis.¹ Overshadowed by other problems during this formative period, the problem of finance became increasingly evident as the Concordat conferences progressed. Even when the estimated cost of Clover Hill reached 5000 louis in April, 1855, Father Soulerin exhibited a confidence that defied practical explanation. Aware of the necessity of the undertaking and convinced of the working of Providence, he prepared to exhaust every legal channel for raising money. The Toronto Superior's only regret was that "our finances do not permit us to establish a grander establishment."² It is only possible to conjecture the magnitude of Father Soulerin's 'grander establishment' since there was such a vast gap between its cost and Community resources.

¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 18, 1854, p.1.

²Ibid., April, 1855, p.3.

While the Basilians showed a slight profit, the bishop had not fared so well in his educational projects. The number of seminarians who could bear the expense of education was relatively small and the task of making up the deficit fell on the bishop's shoulders. His plan to solve the financial strain was, as we have seen, the inauguration of a Seminary fund. Two collections each year in every parish of the diocese was augmented by the government grant accorded to missionary priests. Like other revenues, the one-tenth tithe from each church could be put in the Seminary fund. Bishop Charbonnel's efforts were not limited to his own diocese; a scheme by which neighbouring bishops would contribute to his Seminary was only partially successful. The Archdeacon of Montreal, Father Adolphe Pinsonneault, soon to be consecrated bishop of London, disclosed the attitude of the hierarchy to the plan:

I am happy to say that I fully concur in your plan to support our dear St. Michael's College...I say our, because I understand that the bishops of Hamilton and London, *in facto fieri*, shall soon have their equal share in this most precious institution...it is unfortunate that Kingston and Bytown are keeping aloof.³

The reluctance of the latter bishops to share in the

³ Archdeacon Pinsonneault, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, November 14, 1854, Letter Book, p. 70.

enterprise was largely through the desires of these men to foster the educational establishments in their own dioceses.

In theory, these financial efforts of the Toronto bishop were the solution to the monetary problems of the Palace institution: in actuality, the picture was not so roseate, and when the Community assumed a larger share in its administration, after the signing of the Concordat, the situation became even less promising.

While St. Michael's College was still quartered in the Palace, the bishop indicated that the Seminary collections would be taken up on Pentecost and the Sunday closest to the feast of the Purification, February 2.⁴ The entire amount collected was placed at the disposal of the Seminary needs. As was natural, the diocesan priests looked askance at the prospect of funds being used for purposes other than parish projects. Hardly a year had elapsed when Father Soulerin wrote: "the collections are not viewed with pleasure by the priests who believe what they raise is lost for them."⁵ That the feeling

⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, May 16th, 1853, p.2.

⁵Ibid., February 13, 1854, p.2.

existed even earlier is best illustrated by a remark passed, on the reception of a priest's contribution: "if all the curés did the same, the bishop would not have to spend a great deal."⁶ The conclusion we may deduce is that either the priests were late in making their returns or were giving the project only a lukewarm support. This is corroborated by an experience of Father Soulerin. On the acquiring of 960 francs after Pentecost 1853, he expressed disappointment that "the collection was announced the preceding Sunday at only one mass, so that fully half the parishioners weren't informed."⁷ When we realize that the majority of the Catholic population was poor and that the Seminary collection was added to the regular Sunday collection, we can partially understand the sentiments of the parish priests. We can also understand that these sentiments would hardly give way to feelings of zeal by the simple expedient of the Basilians assuming the financial responsibilities for the upkeep and construction of a new seminary and College. The financial security desired by the Community was not achieved by the signing of the Concordat. In the Palace, the Fathers could expect

⁶Ibid., May 16, 1853, p.1.

⁷Ibid., p.2.

the entire Seminary fund: moved to Clover Hill, the Community received a considerably reduced fund with only one-half of the collections and two-thirds of the grant. It must be emphasized that this was at a time when all the expenses of construction belonged to the Basilians and at a time too when the prospect of Community retention of the Church tithe was remote.

After the signing of the Concordat the days for the Seminary collections were altered, at the behest of the pastors. In 1856, the first collection occurred in March and the second one was scheduled for July or August.⁸ The Basilians, who had received permission in 1855 to collect in the various communities within the borders of the Toronto diocese, looked forward to the months of July and August as the most fruitful time for their work, being free from the duties of teaching during the summer vacation period. A diocesan collection for the Seminary fund could not help but reduce the amount the Fathers would hope to amass. Moreover, people living in areas visited by the Fathers would naturally be perplexed by a two-fold collection for what seemed to be the same purpose.

⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, Holy Saturday, 1856, p.2.

There is little reason to assume that the reception of the portion of the clerical government grant gave the Basilian Community that smug feeling, characteristic of temporal security. Any other view must be ignored in view of the fact that "the seminary grants from the priests are always uncertain."⁹ The clerical lethargy or, more precisely, the barely concealed opposition to the collections was reflected in the matter of the grant. Again, similar reasons formed the basis of these sentiments. The poverty and difficulties of the parish priests, which required great sacrifices, had been somewhat assuaged by the government grant and its surrender reduced the pastors to their previous precarious positions. It was not that the priests lacked generosity as was evident from a letter from the Thorold pastor who wrote in 1852: "I freely and with joy give up my part of the government grant in favour of the Seminary."¹⁰ It was stark necessity that forced the pastors to hesitate. By 1854, the general attitude to the grants was summed up by Father Soulerin: "the diocesan quotas will hardly be regular, if at all, as they depend a great deal on the good

⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 18, 1854, p.2.

¹⁰Rev. Maclachlan, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, September 30, 1852, Letter Book, p.12.

will of the priests."¹¹ In addition, these funds, irregular and uncertain though they were, made their way to the College only after suffering the reduction dictated by the Concordat and only so long as the bishop deemed the necessities of the Community required them.

Not even a modicum of security could be achieved by the Community so long as the tremendous problem of securing 5000 louis was balanced by a revenue determined in great measure by circumstances.

The Basilian Fathers' actual working capital was extremely limited in 1855. The figure of 130 louis, estimated in April 1854, was actually somewhat smaller: only seventy-five louis were possessed, while the remainder was owed the Community by a group of hard-pressed students.¹² To this capital there had been added a loan of 1468 louis at five per cent. interest from the Mother House at Annonay.¹³ The price of the four lots at Clover Hill, purchased from the Elmsley family, which amounted to 500 louis, had been taken from this sum. The remaining money, slightly over

¹¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 18, 1854, p.1.

¹²Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 22, 1855, p.2.

¹³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 13, 1853, p.3.

1000 louis, was invested in Toronto at seven per cent. interest.¹⁴ With the limited means of the Community, the contracting of loans in Toronto was a doubtful matter. The bishop had suggested this procedure at the time of the Concordat conferences and agreed to guarantee any loans contracted by the Fathers for constructions purposes. In addition, Bishop Charbonnel agreed to pay the interest on the sum owing to the Mother House.

With the guarantee of the bishop, the Community was able to contract a loan of 2000 louis at six per cent. interest in Toronto during August 1855.¹⁵

During the summer of 1855 the bishop authorized a diocesan-wide appeal for loans without interest for the Fathers. Though the faithful were urged from the church pulpits to accommodate the Community in this matter, the Basilians themselves, were forbidden to solicit any loans.¹⁶ Unfortunately only a few Catholics were in a position to help. The reliable Mr. Lynn immediately offered seventy-five louis and a charitable lady presented the Fathers with 225 louis on condition her nephew be accepted as a day scholar when the Clover Hill institution was ready for instruction.¹⁷

¹⁴Ibid., p.4.

¹⁵Ibid., August 1, 1855, p.2.

¹⁶Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.3.

¹⁷Ibid.

Further assistance was expected from Mr. Elmsley, soon to return from Europe. That the entire plan proved unsuccessful was indicated by the fact that the Community borrowed 2000 louis at six per cent. interest under the bishop's guarantee in August 1855.¹⁸ A further loan of 481 louis was secured from Annonay at five per cent. interest in April 1856.¹⁹

The constant policy of borrowing did not auger for prosperity and resulted in even less security than the irregular Seminary funds. The action of Bishop Charbonnel in November, 1855 over the Sandwich College affair was also a determining factor in the decision of the Community to adopt more positive methods of securing revenue.

The idea of Basilians canvassing the entire diocese for revenue had been in the mind of Father Soulerin for some time, but he had hesitated to broach the subject because of the two annual Seminary collections. Two factors served to remove any qualms the Toronto Superior possessed. The first was the seeming reluctance of the clergy to evince much enthusiasm in the fund project; the second factor was the success which accompanied the efforts of two Trappists who, during the summer of 1854, solicited funds in the

¹⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, August 16, 1855, p.1.

¹⁹Ibid., Holy Saturday, 1856, p.2.

Toronto diocese and obtained some 50,000 francs.²⁰ The desires of the Fathers to emulate the accomplishments of the Trapists increased as the school year of 1854-55 drew to a close. Early in July 1855, Father Soulerin proposed to the bishop that Basilians be permitted, at least during the vacation period, to preach and collect funds in the diocesan churches.²¹

The hopes of the Community were dashed on the bishop's refusal to authorize these collections. However, after a short consideration, Bishop Charbonnel made a compromise and permitted the Fathers "to go into the diocese but not into Toronto."²² Almost immediately the Community availed itself of the permission and the Basilians were despatched sometimes together and sometimes separately into every area subject to the bishop's jurisdiction. By August 1855, Father Soulerin wrote "my four Confrères are in the country trying to imitate the begging brothers."²³ On the first Sunday of July, Fathers Malbos and Vincent obtained 430 francs, while Fathers Flannery and Molony raised 1820 francs in Hamilton.²⁴ The sagacity of Father Soulerin in selecting Hamilton as a source of income, so early in the campaign, must not go unnoticed; the thriving centre was to

²⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. F. Tourvieille, July 5, 1855, p.3.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., p.4

²³Ibid., August 1, 1855, p.2.

²⁴Ibid., p.3.

be established as a bishopric in December 1855 and would, after that date, be exempt from Basilian inroads. During the first summer some 10,000 francs were collected and hopes were held that an additional 10,000 francs would be secured before the end of October.²⁵

Despite the apparent success of the collections, the Community felt disheartened for a brief period in the early fall of 1855. Much more had been expected and the failure to realize the objective was attributed to the seeming lack of co-operation on the part of Bishop Charbonnel who was preparing to build a Catholic hospital and contemplating an appeal to the people for this purpose in the summer of 1855. In fact, Father Soulerin wrote "the bishop, at the very moment we began to work for our College, has himself begun a good work, but for us, inopportune... he is going to build a hospital."²⁶ This was, of course, the reason for the refusal to the Basilian request to collect. Not to be outdone by his people in generosity, however, the bishop made the Community a gift of 10,000 francs in September 1855.²⁷ This sum was as much as the Fathers could have solicited in the Toronto parishes and it

²⁵Ibid., September 18, 1855, p.1.

²⁶Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.3.

²⁷Ibid., September 18, 1855, p.2.

completely removed all their earlier feelings of discouragement. Moreover, it bore witness to the bishop's charity even in the face of such a tremendous undertaking as a hospital, and it explained beyond all doubt the meaning of his unwritten pledge to assist the Community at all times.

The collections for the Seminary and for educational purposes continued till the end of the period covered by this study. Each issue of the 'Mirror' from 1854 until May 28, 1858 contained lists of parish contributions. Its successor, the 'Canadian Freeman', continued this policy from July 23, 1858 until November 4, 1859. These publications give tribute to the generosity of the Catholics, both priests and people, to the Clover Hill undertaking.

In addition to the sums referred to, during the summer and fall of 1855, a further acquisition of 1700 francs was realized through a collection taken up on the occasion of the laying of the corner-stone of St. Basil's Church on September 17, 1855.²⁸ As a result of the summer's work, the Community possessed as its own some 21,700 francs or slightly over 1000 louis.

In the cost of construction, which totalled 5000 louis, no mention was made of ornamental expenses. Costs

²⁸Ibid., p.3.

for statuary, vestments and altars, as well as furniture, were not included. Preparations for these purposes had been commenced shortly after the Clover Hill property had been donated. The construction of a church had been a condition for acquiring the land and Father Soulerin, in May 1855, began to make overtures to France for adequate furnishing. In requesting a statue of the Blessed Virgin, a censor, altar cards, porcelain vases from Father Tourville, the Toronto Superior emphasized that

what you send will be, I hope, not for the Cathedral but for our church...we will have there a centre altar, two side altars, one for the Blessed Virgin and the other for St. Basil.²⁹

The Mother House was not the only centre that heard the requests of Father Soulerin. The Sisters of St. Mary in Ardeche, France, contributed many church vessels including a monstrance.³⁰ The generosity of the Toronto Catholics in providing articles for the decoration of the Church is best illustrated by a poor man who, with no ready cash, gave Father Malbos a horse which was sold and 300 francs was realized.³¹ This sum was turned over to the altar

²⁹Ibid., May 16, 1853, p.3.

³⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Polly, September 19, 1853, p.2.

³¹Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, Holy Saturday, 1856, p.1.

fund. In the matter of furnishing the Church and College, the bishop permitted the Fathers to take all the religious objects from their Palace chapel and all the furniture from their rooms as well "as all the school equipment as is practical."³² The Mother House at Annonay provided much of the equipment to be used in the chemistry laboratory.

Hopes were also expressed that material assistance might come from the Propagation of the Faith though it seemed unlikely that this help would be given prior to the construction of the Church.³³ At first, Father Soulerin expected the aid to come through the offices of the Bishop of Toronto but such was not to be the case. From April 1855 until March 1856 the Fathers waited anxiously "hoping that Monseigneur will recommend our work to the Propagation of the Faith."³⁴ When these hopes failed to materialize, Father Soulerin decided to make positive efforts himself and early in March 1856 he wrote: "I am busy writing to the Propagation authorities."³⁵ Correspondence fails to indicate whether the Church received any help through this

³²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 18, 1855, p.3.

³³Ibid., August 8, 1854, p.2.

³⁴Ibid., April 5, 1855, p.2.

³⁵Ibid., March 16, 1856, p.1.

medium or not. That the bishop failed to use his influence on behalf of the Community resulted from his hospital needs together with another project, the erection of a centre for the aged.

No means of raising revenue was ignored by the Community. Some were followed up with grim determination, others, because of circumstances, were felt to be impractical. These latter means were by no means necessarily relegated to obscurity but were simply filed away for later attention. Such a project was the plan of increasing fees. Certainly, in theory, the raising of tuition and boarding fees would produce a larger revenue and in conformity with this logic, the bishop had raised the boarding fees by 100 francs for the academic year 1854-1855.³⁶ A superficial examination would pronounce the plan a success as "the year terminated with the same number of students as the preceding one, despite the increase of fees."³⁷ In analyzing the situation, however, no profit was revealed. Of a total of fifty-two students registered, twenty-eight were boarders and of these "only one half can pay some tuition."³⁸ In other words, those who could pay something, paid as much as possible without averting to the total cost, which was,

³⁶Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.21

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., November 4, 1854, p.2.

in any case, beyond their resources.

When queried about the prospect of an increased fee at the new foundation, Father Malbos gave the rather pessimistic retort that "scarcely fifteen students will be found capable of paying their board in all of Upper Canada."³⁹ In the light of this remark from an experienced econome and the results observed regarding the financial potentialities of the students, the project of increasing fees was filed away for future consideration. The idea was simply one other expedient that could, or could not, bear merit. That it was considered, though temporarily, revealed the exhausting efforts of the Community to achieve financial stability.

Each year the Canadian government provided adequate grants to develop and assist educational establishments. In 1855, the common schools of Canada West received 55,000 louis.⁴⁰ In addition to these common schools, such centres of higher education as the University of Toronto and Victoria College were also the recipients of governmental largess.⁴¹

³⁹Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 25, 1855, p.2.

⁴⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, July 5, 1855, p.4.

⁴¹J. G. Hodgins, op. cit., vol.12, p.242.

That the government would be generous to an appeal from St. Michael's College was logical but prior to presenting any petition and to preclude any possibility of conflicting with the legal deterrent of giving public funds to priests, the Community deemed it necessary to incorporate the College. An act for incorporation was introduced on the floor of the government chamber on April 27, 1855, and the act was passed, receiving the royal assent on May 19, 1855.⁴² While the government was considering the matter of incorporation, the Fathers prepared their petition. No doubt the make-up of the government, which was located in Toronto from 1855 to 1859, had much to do with the immediate success the petition received. There was an equal number of representatives from Canada West and Canada East and therefore contained a large number of Catholics who would naturally be well disposed to assist the infant institution. On May 22, 1855, a government grant of £350 was given to St. Michael's College as an aid for the year 1855.⁴³ Unfortunately for the Community, this sum was given to Bishop Charbonnel and Father Soulerin tearfully recorded that "the bishop kept the entire sum."⁴⁴

⁴²Ibid., Vol.11,p.132

⁴³Ibid., Vol.13, p.119.

⁴⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, July 5, 1855, p.2.

That he had the right to do so was unquestioned, as the bishop was the head of the corporation of St. Michael's College. That he did so was not anticipated. At any rate this episcopal retention of the government grant, coinciding as it did with the initial decision of the bishop to prohibit Basilian solicitation of funds in the diocese, caused a general dejection among the Fathers. These two blows prompted Father Soulerin to take definite steps. First, he despatched a petition to the Governor-General requesting that the grant be accompanied with specific instructions as to its use. This was ignored.⁴⁵ Secondly, he petitioned the same authority for permission to affiliate with the University of Toronto.⁴⁶ Of course the main object of this proposal was to share the rich endowments of the government supported university. The request was returned to Father Soulerin with the instruction that all such demands were to be submitted to the Senate of the University. That the request was followed up in very lukewarm fashion was partially the result of the successful campaign in the Basilian collections and largely because of the controversy raging over religious issues in Toronto University.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., p.3.

While it is beyond the scope of this work to delve into the later affiliation of the two institutions or to analyze the university problem, a very brief sketch of the Catholic Church-University relations is necessary to show the extent of the efforts of the Community to gain financial security.

On January 17, 1851, Bishop Charbonnel had approved the acts establishing the University, feeling that "they are fully calculated to meet the wishes and expectations of the whole community."⁴⁷ The bishop hoped for a future affiliation which would permit him to oversee the religious instruction of Catholic students. Little, however, was done in this regard because the attention of Bishop Charbonnel became centred on the elementary separate school issue. His Palace school looked after the needs of young men beyond the elementary stage and Loretto Convent provided similar instruction for girls. The Sisters of St. Joseph and the Christian Brothers provided more than adequate training for the younger girls and boys. No provision was made for instruction in law and medicine under Catholic auspices and young Catholics who sought these careers had to make use of Toronto University.

⁴⁷Bishop Charbonnel, "On the New University," article in The Catholic Mirror, Toronto, Vol.14. January 17, 1851, p.3, col.1.

As the 1850's passed, the Bishop's earlier feeling of complacency towards the University underwent a profound change. In a letter to the Propagation of the Faith, Bishop Charbonnel accused the University of excluding Catholics from scholarships and of denying degrees to them; fears were expressed for the faith of the students because they mingled with and were taught by protestants.⁴⁸ Clashes of opinion were frequent and even the two Catholic newspapers, the 'Citizen' and the 'Mirror' were not in accord. An editorial of the 'Mirror' of February 13, 1857, cited a passage of the 'Citizen' which had approved of the sending of Catholic students to the University. The 'Mirror' firmly opposed the suggestion and based its opposition on the fact that "not only are all the professors protestants, but that six are ministers."⁴⁹ The problems exerted such wide-spread controversy that the Community deemed it imprudent to press for immediate affiliation.

During the course of the struggle, the government continued to bestow grants on St. Michael's College. In 1857, the amount was increased to £500 a year and in 1858 a fixed sum of \$2000.00 was established.⁵⁰ As previously,

⁴⁸Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Cardinal Fransoni, May 30, 1853, Letter Book, p.37.

⁴⁹Editorial from The Catholic Mirror, Vol.20, February 13, 1857, p.2. col.5.

⁵⁰J. G. Hodgins, op. cit., Vol.14, p.238; Vol.15, p.34.

these grants were offered to the bishop, who felt that other needs were more pressing, and as a consequence, did not forward them to the Basilians. In fact, it was not until the episcopate of Bishop Lynch that the government grants were given to St. Michael's.⁵¹ This is not to say that the entire amount was retained by Bishop Charbonnel. No doubt his gift of 10,000 francs to the Community in September 1855 was part of the government grant; moreover, he promised to pay the salaries of four professors if the grant was obtained.⁵²

After an exhaustive effort by the Community to achieve economic stability several things become very clear. The bishop would demand a scrutiny of the financial situation and could be expected to prevent chaos on the one hand and too much prosperity on the other. Grants would be forthcoming to the Community, determined by need, in the same fashion as the bi-annual collections and the priests' grant. The Community could depend on the bishop

⁵¹ Rev. J. Soulerin, Memoirs, 1863, p.4. The Memoirs are contained in the Basillian Archives, Toronto and the page number refers to the English translation of the manuscript made by the author.

⁵² Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, August 8, 1854, p.3.

to guarantee loans and could expect his influence to contract loans bearing no interest. The chief sources of revenue were to be the results of collections, either in St. Basil's Church, once constructed, or in the missionary parishes of the Toronto diocese. In the latter case, the revenue would be obtained largely during the summer vacation period, while the Basilians could provide greater external ministerial work.

CHAPTER V

MINOR PROBLEMS AT CLOVER HILL

While the financial problem was one of major proportions, there were also difficulties of a minor nature connected with the actual construction of the foundation that taxed the ingenuity of the architect, contractors and Fathers.

In an effort to economize on the construction costs, the proposal of a half-brick, half-wooden establishment received some consideration. While possessing the obvious immediate economical advantage over a structure made entirely of bricks, such a hybrid edifice would be hopelessly inadequate within a few decades. Moreover, the inevitable warping of the wood and its frequent need of paint, as well as its grotesque-like appearance, were solid reasons against its adoption. Should any additional floors be constructed, the wooden section would, very probably, be replaced by brick and such an undertaking might prove very costly to a succeeding generation of Basilians. Besides, it was contrary to the wishes of the architect, Mr. Hay, who enjoyed such an esteemed reputation that Father Soulerin decided to abide by his decision.¹ The Superior was quick to accept the

¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, August 8, 1854, p.2.

architect's advice on style. Because of its devotional appearance on the one hand, and its moderate price on the other, English Gothic was preferred to other forms of architecture.

Excavation work began on Clover Hill, July 9, 1855, despite the fact that no contract had been given to any carpenters, masons or plasterers.² The irregularity of the terrain and the sandy foundation made the architect's work harder and increased the anxiety of the already harassed Fathers. Faced with the prospect of building a church and college on sand, the Community was somewhat mollified by the assurances of the architect. All the surrounding edifices were built on the same foundation and were quite satisfactory despite the fact "that Clover Hill was really a sand hill."³ At a rate of .90 a cubic metre, the foundation was dug to an extent of eight feet.⁴ Fortunately for the Community, the excavation costs were paid for by the sale of the sand. In fact, the sand proved to be a boon as it was one of the two factors that reduced the estimated cost of construction to 4500 louis.⁵

²Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.3.

³Ibid., August 1, 1855, p.3.

⁴Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.3.

⁵Ibid., August 1, 1855, p.3.

The other factor might be termed a political gift, as it consisted of a community donation of a set of volumes on French religious architecture and a lady's watch, to Mr. Hay. That the donation was not completely altruistic is attested to by the superior's defence of the expenditure: "we will lose nothing by them; Mr. Hay will be more generous?"⁶

Though only a short distance from the Toronto city limits, Clover Hill did not possess either sewers or adequate drainage. Because of its elevation excess water ran off the slopes down to the city. This contributed to the elements which each Spring turned the rude streets of 'Muddy York' into a vast quagmire. Though Clover Hill was spared this irritating problem, the deficiency in suitable drainage made the question of latrines and the proper disposal of excess water used for laundry and personal cleansing purposes, one of annoying importance. Even in the palace, inadequate disposal led to a brief epidemic in the heat and humidity of early summer, 1854.⁷ Finally, after a great deal of correspondence between Annonay and Toronto, the construction of a subterranean water route some eight feet below surface, was felt to be a

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., November 14, 1855, p.1.

practical solution of the water disposal problem. The more delicate question of a latrine was temporarily settled by the erection of a small brick edifice on the northern extremity of the site. Demolished with the later extension of the city sewage system, the latrine was situated in such a position that the watchful eyes of supervisors could easily detect any undue loitering on the part of mischievous students.

The northern part of the property was geared for practical purposes. There could be found the shed for horses and buggies and the entrance for tradesmen as well as the pumps, the latrine and the recreation area. The section south of the establishment was to be of an entirely different nature. At first the idea of a rectangular court was mooted and it led Father Soulerin to envisage "a venerable abbey of the Middle Ages."⁸ As we have seen the structure was to take on the form of a giant letter 'H' which would provide for possible future extension should needs and finances permit it. This fitted in with the idea of the court. Enclosed by the main part of the College building to the north, and the projections of the Church and College to the west and east, the court was to have

⁸Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.4.

a long and high barrier-like brick wall as its southern extremity. The wall was to be pierced by a door for the convenience of church-goers and college day scholars. Though this plan would have produced a thing of beauty and would have insured a great degree of privacy, it was ultimately rejected because of the expense involved.⁹

It is somewhat incredible that a three-story edifice and a church, of such magnitude as the Clover Hill structure, could be constructed in a year. Father Soulerin had apparently caught the tempo of the New World when he expressed hope that the buildings would be completed by December 1855.¹⁰ This allowed only six months between excavation and occupancy. Lest the Toronto Superior be considered too much of an optimist, it must be realized that all buildings were constructed with unbelievable rapidity in the 1850's: "here everything is activity, zeal and boldness, with the impatience of youth."¹¹ While the extreme cold of the winter of 1855-56 delayed the workers, this eventuality would not have escaped the Superior in his prophecy regarding the time of residence. Thoroughly aware of the rigours of the climate, Father Soulerin, in February 1854, pointed out that a typical

⁹Ibid., August 1, 1855, p.4.

¹⁰Ibid., July 5, 1855, p. 5 .

¹¹Ibid., November 14, 1855, p.2.

Canadian winter lasted from mid-October to mid-February with average temperatures of from nine degrees to eighteen degrees below zero.¹² Despite the cold, Father Vincent disclosed in February 1856 that "the roof of the school is now covered and the Church will be, by June."¹³ The frigid conditions carried on into March and the now impatient Superior began to fret because "the top of the Church is still not covered."¹⁴

In the light of the rapidity of movement it comes with little surprise that the Superior General began to have doubts on the quality of the work. Had Father Soulerin been gifted with prescience, his best reply would have revolved, in some way, around the building which in 1955 still stands firm. As it was, he could only write; "the work is solid; we have good workers and they build solidly."¹⁵ In showing how the edifice was erected so quickly while possessing walls with a thickness of thirty inches at the base and eighteen inches at the top, the Superior explained that it was the result of having the materials at hand and "a great number of workers who are employed at all

¹²Ibid., February 13, 1854, p.1.

¹³Rev. C. Vincent, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, February 13, 1856, p.1.

¹⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 16, 1856, p.1.

¹⁵Ibid., November 14, 1855, p.2.

times.¹⁶ Doubtless, too, the working day of labour was of much longer duration than in modern times.

The cold weather which hampered the workers, particularly on roof and church steeple, caused annoyance to city dwellers. Despite the fact that their water pipes reposed some eight feet below the surface, the cold penetrated this depth, freezing the water and breaking the pipes.¹⁷ This prompted both Community and architect to deepen the subterranean tunnel by another foot.

Despite the climatic conditions which ranged from freezing cold in the winter to extreme heat and humidity in summer, the work continued so that Divine Office was chanted in St. Basil's Church on the feast of the Holy Cross, September 14, 1856 and classes were commenced in St. Michael's College on the succeeding day.¹⁸ A letter of Father Soulerin describes the official opening of the Church and College on November 16, 1856.¹⁹ Present for the ceremonies were Bishops Farrell and Pinsonneault of Hamilton and London, respectively, who conducted the sacred functions in the absence of Bishop Charbonnel. After

¹⁶Ibid.,

¹⁷Ibid., March 16, 1856, p.2.

¹⁸Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, October 23, 1856, p.1.

¹⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 23, 1856, p.1.

the official blessing was performed by the two prelates, Bishop Pinsonneault celebrated mass and Bishop Farrell assisted at vespers. The evening was devoted to entertainment and consisted of a spirited debate on the morality of slavery by six of Father Malbos' more advanced theologians. After receiving a formal acknowledgement of gratitude in both Latin and English, the bishops declared a half holiday for the students.

The Basilian Community had reason to be proud of its accomplishment. In a period of slightly over four years' residence in Toronto, the Fathers had constructed a foundation both practical and beautiful.²⁰ That it required a great deal of determination mixed with zeal and unwavering faith must be very apparent. However, before the Community could spend any time admiring their work, new problems hastened to present themselves, though with the building of St. Michael's and St. Basil's the major difficulty had been surmounted.

The appointment of a pastor and a curate was a necessary preliminary to the opening of the new St. Basil's parish. According to the Concordat, these appointees were

²⁰ cf. Appendix 5, p. 230. From the appendix, it is evident that the writer based his account on the architect's original plan, before expense necessitated the elimination of the rectangular court.

to be subject to the Superior of the foundation in the same way as the professors. Actually then, 'ex officio', the real pastor was the Superior, though he could be expected to share his parish responsibility or to delegate it completely to an acting pastor. In either event, the introduction of new parish policies would have to receive the approbation of the Superior. When the small number of Basilians resident at Clover Hill made it necessary for parish Fathers to teach as well, the Superior would take a constant and detailed interest in parish affairs to prevent any one staff member from assuming too crippling an amount of work. In this case, too, all the Fathers would share to some extent in the parish work. This policy was to be observed until sufficient numbers warranted the assignment of certain Fathers solely for the performance of parish duties. Thus the parish duties were, in 1856, somewhat of a Community effort and the official diocesan records listed "St. Basil's Church as under the direction of the Gentlemen of St. Basil."²¹

Despite the fact of the co-operative imprint on

²¹Samuel G. Lynn, Memorandum Book, p.36. (This account book, preserved in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto, was maintained by Mr. Lynn, the lay secretary of Bishop Charbonnel.)

parish activities, it was necessary to have one priest designated as pastor and another as curate for the benefit of the parishioners. In April 1856, Father Soulerin wrote to the General stating that "Father Molony should be in charge of the parish."²² The suggestion of Father Molony as pastor was a very logical one as he had spent more time in parish work than any of his confrères. In France he had performed the office of pastor in the parish of St. Appollinaire near Vernoux.²³ From 1850 to 1852, as the only Basilian in Canada, he had assisted the bishop in the Cathedral and was made an archdeacon. His preaching ability was publicly recognized and his selection to expound the Immaculate Conception dogma, in the Cathedral in February 1855, attested to this fact. In addition, he was of the same origin as so many of the Toronto Catholics. This was an important factor because in Canada West "foreign priests who remain here five or six years will never have the same influence as one of their own."²⁴

Because of Father Vincent's difficulty in mastering the English tongue, he was not even considered as a

²²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 6, 1856, p.1.

²³Shook, op. cit., p.38

²⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, May 16, 1853, p.2.

curate by the Superior. The duties of Father Malbos and Flannery, the former as College econome, and the latter in connection with the Weston parish, made the choice of curate a difficult one. In the dilemma, the Superior admitted toying with the prospect of suggesting the appointment of himself as curate and Father Malbos as superior. This proposal was quickly quashed by Bishop Charbonnel.²⁵

In November 1856, the parish functioned with "Father Molony looking after the spiritual welfare and Father Malbos the temporal welfare of the parish, with Father Vincent administering the ceremonies and choir."²⁶ In addition to his teaching duties, Father Flannery was pastor of Weston and this double burden disqualified him for the office of curate at St. Basil's. To this process of elimination, Father Malbos owed his appointment. The duties of Fathers Molony and Malbos comprised all parochial work but in emergencies, of course, all five Basilians were available for help. Moreover, each of the Fathers took his regular turn in preaching and hearing confessions.²⁷

Obtaining adequate and sufficient professors was a

²⁵Ibid., April 6, 1856, p.2. This letter quotes the impressions of Bishop Charbonnel on the feasibility of Father Malbos becoming Superior.

²⁶Ibid., November 23, 1856, p.1.

²⁷Ibid., p.2.

problem which faced the Community during the entire decade of the '50's. Of course, the ideal solution of the problem centred around the acquisition of capable young men who were attracted to the Basilian way of life and who were both willing and anxious to devote their energies to the instruction of youth. Though the Community increased by this Providential means in the '60's, thereby greatly reducing the faculty problem, vocations were virtually negligible during the period treated in this study. As a result, from the outset, the Fathers were forced to use the most suitable and inexpensive means to supplement their number. Even as early as 1853, some of the more mature ecclesiastical students were employed as auxiliaries in the teaching of the younger boys: "Mr. Rooney looks after supervision, while Mr. Keleher teaches an English class and Mr. O'Dea is useful in many ways."²⁸ Fortunately for the Community in this early period, at least, the character of the boys was of a very high calibre: "there is no ill-will in any of them."²⁹ As a result, supervision was not a problem and frequently the boarders were left unsupervised so that the Fathers could perform either religious exercises or recreation in common. By 1857,

²⁸Ibid., November 21, 1853, p.1.

²⁹Ibid., May 16, 1854, p.3.

the students were described as "good and submissive, but they exhibit a naturally independent and restless spirit."³⁰ This restlessness precluded the continuation of the honour system in the field of supervision.

The employment of the more advanced ecclesiastical students as supplementary teachers proved practical. It received the approbation of the General whose only counsel was to recommend "that Basilians be reserved for the higher classes."³¹ In an effort to perpetuate the system so long as the interests of the Community required it, Father Soulerin had insisted on its insertion in the Concordat. With this the bishop had complied.

While each passing year brought an increased student body, there was no proportionate increase in Basilian faculty members. This reduced the sense of satisfaction the Fathers would have otherwise felt: "if there is satisfaction on one side, there is solicitude on the other...we are only five teachers and we have to teach almost everything you teach at Annonay."³² In addition, constant supervision and weekend ministerial work claimed the attention of the Fathers.

³⁰Ibid., March 29, 1857, p.2.

³¹Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Rev. J. Soulerin, November 18, 1856, p.1.

³²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 18, 1855, p.2.

Besides these duties participated in by each Basilian, Father Soulerin exercised his functions as Superior and each day taught classes in logic, natural philosophy, Sacred Scripture to the ecclesiastics, as well as geometry to the younger students. To his duties as econome and curate, Father Malbos added his classes of theology, latin and greek while Fathers Molony, Flannery and Vincent were similarly taxed to the extent of their endurance.³³ Nor can we overlook the fact that these duties were performed in the midst of a building campaign, while supplying chaplains for neighbouring convents and preachers for special occasions. It is little wonder that the Toronto Superior wrote: "the problem of professors is one of the greatest difficulties."³⁴ A prolonged sickness of one or more of the Fathers would have had a disastrous effect.

The final year of Palace occupation, 1855-56, saw a total of ninety-four students, taking advantage of Basilian pedagogy. Of these, seventy were boarders. To assist in the teaching of this large number, the Community made use of three ecclesiastics.³⁵ The identity of these three men is not disclosed but we may assume they were Messrs.

³³Ibid., p.3.

³⁴Ibid., April 18, 1854, p.3.

³⁵Ibid., November 23, 1856, p.2.

Northgraves, Rooney and O'Dea.³⁶ In the school year of 1856-57, the student total reached a hundred and of these, twenty indicated their desire of studying for the priesthood.³⁷ To cope with the large student body the Community was assisted by four ecclesiastics, Messrs. Northgraves, Rooney, Leverman and Gibrat.³⁸ The following year witnessed the arrival of still more students and to meet these demands, the Fathers in 1857 appointed an attending physician, Doctor Cotter, and employed Messrs. Northgraves and Rooney, now subdeacons and Mr. Leverman, as well as Messrs. Shea, McGuire, Kennedy and Klinger.³⁹ The procedure was typical of succeeding years; as the students increased, the Community simply employed more ecclesiastics to carry the teaching burden.

This auxiliary system was never entirely satisfactory by the simple fact that the goal of the ecclesiastics was the secular priesthood rather than the work of a teaching

³⁶There are references to these three ecclesiastics teaching in 1854 and to the employment of Messrs. Northgraves and Rooney in 1857.

³⁷Editorial in The Catholic Mirror, Toronto, Vol.20, May 22, 1857, p.3.col.1.

³⁸Lynn, op.cit., p.37.

³⁹Advertisement in The Catholic Mirror, Toronto, Vol.20, May 22, 1857, p.2. col.1.

Community. However, in the light of limited resources on the one hand, and a dirth of vocations on the other, the auxiliary system provided the only practical means of carrying on the laborious mission of the Community. In the near future, Providence was to shine on St. Michael's by sending such veritable giants as the O'Connors, Fergusons, McBradys and Brennans to bolster and cement the foundation established in 1852.

CHAPTER VI

PROBLEM OF CURRICULA

One of the less difficult problems confronting the Community was the establishment of a proper curriculum. Long years at Annonay spent in preparing French Students for the ecclesiastical and secular states enabled the Fathers to prepare a suitable prospectus with a minimum of effort. Had it not been for the language and location difficulties together with the glaring need of a larger faculty, the problem would have been relatively easy to solve.

A two-fold course of studies was offered Catholic pupils. The classical department was geared for the ecclesiastics and the young men seeking a professional career, while the commercial course was offered to pupils who sought a limited practical education.¹

The commercial course was normally of three years' duration, and while students of any age could attend, a knowledge of the reading and writing of English was essential. This qualification compelled most applicants to spend some time in the elementary school conducted by the Christian Brothers before attending St. Michael's. During the three year period the students studied Religious Knowledge,

¹St. Michael's College, "Prospectus", advertisement in The Catholic Citizen of Toronto, Vol. 2, April 24, 1857, p.1. col.4.

English and French Composition and Grammar, Arithmetic, Bookkeeping, Elementary Geometry, Algebra and Surveying. History, Geography and Natural Philosophy, our modern Physics, were also compulsory.² Closely resembling the studies pursued in modern high schools and colleges, the classical course was of eight years' duration. For the first four years, this course embraced the subjects taught in commercial, together with Latin and Greek and a more extensive study of Mathematics, Physics and History. Chemistry, Music and Drawing were included but were not requisites.³ Corresponding with the first two years of a modern college Arts course, the fifth and sixth classic years, termed Belles Lettres and Rhetoric respectively, included a more intensive study of the Languages, Mathematics, as well as an introduction to Philosophy. The final two years, Junior and Senior Philosophy, were devoted primarily to the various branches of the 'queen of Sciences'. For the ecclesiastical students, there were an additional two years devoted to Theology.

²The modern system of grades was not in practice: students progressed from Elementary English, through Second Commercial, to First Commercial.

³The classical grades were termed Elementary English, Elementary Latin, Second Latin and First Latin.

Having outlined a course of studies conformable to both their traditional educational system of preparing ecclesiastical candidates and to the circumstances peculiar to their new foundation, the Fathers turned their attention to the consideration of student vacations, examinations and dress. In such a consideration, the fixing of a timetable suitable to the faculty was essential. The problem of arranging for a relatively small staff to cope with a heavy course of studies was eased by the presence of conscripted auxiliaries in the persons of Messrs. Northgraves and Rooney as well as by the capabilities of the Basilians who had gained such valuable experience at Annonay.⁴

The school year was a long one, being broken by only three vacation periods of comparatively short duration. Besides a week of holidays at Easter, the students enjoyed a summer recess which extended from mid July to early September and a winter break between December 26 and Epiphany. While in school the pupils had dress regulations to observe

⁴Classes in commercial were conducted by Father Vincent who taught Mathematics and Bookkeeping and by Mr. Northgraves. Father Flannery and Mr. Rooney were responsible for the classical scholars in their first four years. The education of more advanced students fell to the lot of Father Soulerin, Molony and Malbos. Theology was taught by Father Malbos and Molony who also assisted Father Soulerin in the philosophy classes. Rhetoric and Belles Lettres also came under Father Molony's jurisdiction, though he divided the latter with Father Flannery.

and on Sundays and Wednesdays, when walk-days occurred, students were also obliged to wear a uniform. Consisting of frock coat, waistcoat and pantaloons, all black in colour, the uniform was certainly a distinctive garb, and adequately bespoke the ecclesiastical ambitions of St. Michael's College students. The uniform and the vacation periods both evidenced the French background of the Basilian Fathers.

Oral examinations were conducted every three months and, in the presence of parents, relatives and friends, the students were subject to a rigid scrutiny by each of the professors. The description of a typical examination is contained in a letter of Father Soulerin in January 1853:

Bishop Charbonnel replied to a latin greeting... then the questions were in English, so that His Lordship judged not only the students' progress but also the examiners' proficiency in the new tongue... the students were able to answer questions on almost half of the Latin grammar and on forty chapters of History, besides other material.⁵

The spectre of these examinations hanging over the students proved a powerful inducement for study and work. Debates or discussions on moral or dogmatic topics augmented the examination requirements of the theologians.

⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. F. Tourvieille, January 7, 1853, p.2.

At this point it is of necessity to interject a brief analysis of the curricula or aims of existing educational institutions, both Catholic and non-Catholic, in Canada West, to obtain some realization of the cultural structure erected by the Basilian Community in Toronto.

Besides St. Michael's, there were two other Catholic colleges in existence in Canada West during the period of this study. The foundation of both of these institutions anti-dated the Basilian establishment. St. Joseph's College at Bytown, conducted by the Oblate Community, and later to become Ottawa University, was founded by Bishop Guigues of that city in 1848, while Regiopolis College at Kingston was erected in 1838 by Bishop MacDonell.

The curricula of these three institutions had many factors in common. Like St. Michael's, the Oblates' College was based on the French system of education but, unlike the Basilian seat of learning, St. Joseph's College was not a 'Petit Seminaire', though in 1889, it added faculties of Theology and Canon Law and from the outset encouraged the attendance of seminarians. Regiopolis College, incorporated in 1837, was opened in 1838 with a faculty of diocesan professors.⁶ Theological training for Kingston ecclesiastics

⁶cf. Appendix 6, p. 233

had been provided at Iona Seminary and Regiopolis was established to supplement this institution by offering pre-theological education, moulded on the lines of the classical course later to be adopted at St. Michael's.⁷

At first Bytown College introduced two courses of study.⁸ An evening and night school provided education for an adult group. The rudiments of French and English Grammar together with Arithmetic, Geography, Drawing and Agriculture were offered. The regular course of instruction embraced both classical and commercial subjects. Besides Latin, English and French, Bookkeeping formed an essential part of the course. By 1854, the College established a full classical course similar in all details to the one at St. Michael's, except that commercial subjects were included.⁹ An elementary class of one year's duration, devoted to the study of French, preceded the classical course: in addition, there was a special course both in French and English. From either of these courses, applicants could be promoted to the classical course.

⁷Largely because of its almost identical similarity in curriculum with St. Michael's, Assumption College, established in Sandwich, later Windsor, in 1855, will be treated in the section of this work dealing with the extension of Basilian activities in Canada.

⁸File 18/8/1848 "Prospectus of the College of Bytown," Archives of the University of Ottawa, Ontario.

⁹File 1/9/1854, "Prospectus," Archives of the University of Ottawa, Ontario, transcribed from the Ottawa Tribune.

It is always difficult to compare the merits of different institutions, not only because the institutions were in the formative or experimental stage in the 1850's, but because circumstances always play such an important part. Institutions under the guidance of religious ordinarily have the advantage of undivided professorial attention whereas diocesan professors, at least in mid-nineteenth century Canada, were compelled to undertake parochial duties, as well. At any rate, Bishop Charbonnel wrote to the Basilian General in 1855: "without complimenting the Basilians, their college is the equal of Bytown and superior to Kingston."¹⁰ It was high praise indeed for the hard working Basilian Fathers who were compelled "to mingle in so many things that did not directly concern them."¹¹

In Upper Canada, the first evidence of secondary education, as we know it today, was the foundation of Upper Canada College in 1829 established through the efforts of Sir John Colborne, the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. The Anglican and Methodist factions led by Strachan and Ryerson respectively, had engaged in a bitter struggle over the organization of a university at Toronto, to be named

¹⁰Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 3, 1855, p.1.

¹¹Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 19, 1853, p.1.

King's College. Colborne, impatient at the delay in establishing the university, determined, at least, to erect a secondary school. Upper Canada College brought to Toronto a number of teachers, chiefly graduates from Oxford and Cambridge and according to a report for the year 1855, the number of students at the institution numbered two hundred and fifty-five, of whom two hundred and twenty-nine were day students.¹² Its classical course, of only four years' duration, stamped Upper Canada as the perfect example of a Royal Grammar School rather than a College. Thoroughly Anglican in staff and student-body, Upper Canada aimed at preparing its students for King's College which was finally opened in 1843 after long years of inter-denominational friction. The Anglican triumph over Ryerson was evident by the presence of Family Compact adherents firmly entrenched in the University Council.¹³ Latin, Greek, Mathematics, French, English, Geography, History, Natural Philosophy, Drawing, Music and Divinity were included in the Upper Canada curriculum. The inclusion of Bookkeeping in its classical course resembled the system used at St. Joseph's, Bytown, to effectively fuse

¹²Upper Canada College, "Report to the Lieutenant Governor," Journal of Upper Canada College, Vol.23, Toronto 1856, p.3.

¹³D.C.Masters, Rise of Toronto, 1850-1890, Toronto, University Press, 1947, p.39. This author cites Sherwood, McCaul, Blake, Sullivan and Gwynne as Council members.

the commercial and classical in one course of study.

The secularization of King's College in 1850 by an act of Parliament sponsored by Robert Baldwin shattered the Anglican monopoly of the university and it also effectively prevented students who began their classic course at Upper Canada College from completing it under Anglican auspices. King's College, or rather, Toronto University after 1850, was completely separated from all ecclesiastical influence and control. To fill the void created by the act, the Anglicans established Trinity College in 1851. In the meantime, the Presbyterians had established Knox College in Toronto in 1844 as a purely theological college and Queen's College in Kingston in 1842 as an arts college offering a classical course. University College, a non-sectarian institution to provide the classic education for non-denominational students, was established in 1853 as an integral part of Toronto University. Victoria College, founded by Ryerson and the Methodists in Cobourg in 1841, provided the adherents of John Wesley's religion with instruction in classics. Its program included studies in Hebrew and in Natural and Revealed Religion, but otherwise like Queen's and University College, coincided in general with the classical

course offered at St. Michael's.¹⁴

From a consideration of the various educational institutions in Canada West during the 1850's, it is very evident that education on a secondary or college level was almost exclusively the undertaking of religious groups. Though Upper Canada was established by the state, it was under the aegis of the Anglican Family Compact and the undenominational University of Toronto had been nurtured by the same element. The purpose of education was largely a religious one aiming at instilling the tenets of religious beliefs into students and of providing suitable centres for the instruction of men destined to become ecclesiastical or professional leaders. This, of course, was one of the reasons in the seeming complete disregard of female education.

Each institution was a private one in the sense that fees had to be paid by the students, while the colleges set religious qualifications and established the curricula. Theoretically, the fees made secondary education somewhat of a luxury to be indulged in by the rich, though the policy adopted by St. Michael's belied this conclusion. The struggle for government grants on

¹⁴Nathanael Burwash, "Life of Egerton Ryerson," in Makers of Canada, Vol. 13, Toronto, Morang and Company, 1903, p. 143.

the part of each institution is evidence that the problem of student fees was not unique to the Basilian foundation. Because of the Victorian consciousness of religious differences and the religious strife engendered by The Family Compact activities of the 1840's and the Clergy Reserves issues, religious qualifications were seldom needed. It would be as uncommon for a Methodist to enrol in an Anglican college as a Catholic to enrol in a Presbyterian institution.

Except for the religious training, the curricula of the various institutions exhibited a striking similarity. All possessed the classical course but in the curricula of Victoria College and especially University College could be found the beginnings of an increasing emphasis on the practical rather than the speculative sciences. In Cobourg, Victoria gave the study of French only scant attention as it was not essential for Methodist scholars in Canada West and studies of the Greek Testament and Biblical Literature replaced it. Science took its place in Belles Lettres and Rhetoric to a much more marked degree than in the Catholic institutions.¹⁵ Included in the classical course at University College were the subjects of Minerology, Geology, Botany, Zoology,

¹⁵Ibid., p. 144

Meteorology, as well as German and Spanish.¹⁶

It was clear that only a short period of time was to elapse before the classical course would either be supplanted or supplemented by other courses geared to meet the aims of a society beginning "to live only by money and for money."¹⁷ Changes in curriculum would, of a certainty, affect the Basilian Community and constitute an alarming problem for the next generation of Fathers.

This evolution in Canadian education, barely perceptible in the 1850's, from an emphasis on the speculative to the practical was realized by Father Soulerin: "here, in general, education is more practical than speculative."¹⁸ Aware of a feeling of timidity, characteristic of all the Fathers, in the presence even of less educated persons, the Toronto Superior was inclined to base it on his French educational background, or more precisely his Annonay background: "we are too timid...believe ourselves very incapable...our custom is stronger than we are."¹⁹ With the students, of course,

¹⁶University College Calendar, Toronto, University Press, 1871, pp. 16-20.

¹⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Charmont, August 27, 1853, p.2.

¹⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 13, 1855, p.4.

¹⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, 1855, p.2.

the Basilians were very much at their ease but were "embarrassed in the presence of others less aged."²⁰ In 1860, to the new Superior General, Father Actorie, the Toronto Superior wrote advising against the slavish adherence to the traditional system of education and proposing an active participation in mission endeavours. The aim of the suggested mission work was to overcome the feelings of timidity which he believed to be engendered by the educational system combined with the lethargy, so apparent during an Annonay vacation period. The young active Canadian secular priests engaged in mission work, he admired: "they do not have the appearance of geni as your professors at Annonay but we consider them men of merit."²¹ Waxing more eloquent in his criticism of the traditional Annonay system, Father Soulerin insisted that

....it is true the French educational system surrounds one with shackles...a man is not considered a student until his energy is killed... though he becomes a perfect latinist, hellenist or theorist,.... I do not belittle these knowledges. I believe that these long years of dry studies shackle the spirit and render him inactive.²²

This inactivity was not disturbed during the holiday season as "the confrères in France are in apathy...one

²⁰Ibid., p.3.

²¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Actorie, July 21, 1860, p.2.

²²Ibid.

gains more in a trip of several days than in months of playing bowls or doing nothing."²³ To activate the Community in Annonay and to unshackle itself from a servile devotion to the speculative system of education were entwined problems which could be best solved by an annual trip of a few days' duration and especially by an active participation in week-end mission work:

...the missions are the answer...in the country first where one doesn't need so many preparations...the cities come later...it would be a good means, in my opinion, to revivify the spirit, slowly dying in Annonay.²⁴

That Father Soulerin's proposals were not ignored is attested to by the Community's undertaking of the Owen Sound mission as early as 1863, as well as by the long week-end mission treks to remote hinterland areas by newly ordained Basilians, a custom which persists to modern times. The outlook of the Toronto Superior regarding the work of the external ministry had undergone a profound change between 1853 and 1860. In the former year, he had seen it "as a danger that must be prevented."²⁵ In the latter year, mission work was an essential for the development of full-fledged active Basilian priests. The reason for this change

²³Ibid., p.3.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. F. Tourvieille, March 22, 1853, p.2.

in opinion was based on the fact that mission work was not only of necessity for the faithful, but that it produced a life-giving spirit which the exclusive use of the speculative education system threatened to destroy. Apathetic and shackled priests would be of little use to themselves, to their Community and to the cause of Catholic education in a country "which tries the strongest souls and where one needs so much courage, faith and love of God."²⁶

Though, by 1860, the Canadian foundation was somewhat critical of the traditional leanings of Annonay education, it, by no means, felt that the practical tendencies of education in Canada West were Divinely inspired. It was true that all agreed that "civilization here is at the same level as Europe in every way."²⁷ It was possibly true that "the people here are inclined to put themselves higher than Europeans in their Protestant pride."²⁸ Positing the premise of Father Malbos as correct, the alleged reason could be controverted. The criticism of Father Malbos on the teaching of geography in Canada West, however,

²⁶Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 19, 1853, p.3.

²⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, December 23, 1852, p.1.

²⁸Ibid.

was well founded for "England, Switzerland and the United States are considered as the greatest nations, while France and Austria are simply civilized."²⁹ Immediate future events were to justify the bursar's protests. The star of Louis Napoleon was soon to reach its zenith, while the United States was to be rent by civil war and England was to pay a humiliating tribute, the result of the Washington Treaty.

It is not the intention of this study to establish the primacy of American or European educational systems but merely to offer the observations of the Basilians on the beginning of the educational evolution and the problems resulting from this change. During the Basilian formative years in Canada, 1850-1860, the educational change was merely recognized and problems of curricula were virtually non-existent. Such problems would be the dowry for later Basilians to grasp.

Not the least of the problems requiring thought and patience on the part of the Community was one closely connected with the curriculum. The necessity of understanding the mentality of a group of boys whose background, language, customs and tradition bore such little similarity with the students of Annonay was of paramount importance.

²⁹Ibid., p.3.

Any fear the Fathers had of being ridiculed because of the language defects was quickly dispelled: "they don't even think of laughing at their professors....their respect is not lessened because of our faults in English."³⁰ With religious simplicity the boys spent large parts of their recreation periods correcting the grammatical errors made by the Fathers.³¹

Standing out in the character of the boys was their lively Catholic faith.³² That they had defects was natural, but as Father Soulerin wrote: "they are surely faults of inadvertence or ignorance...there is no ill-will among them."³³ The comments of the Basilian seminarian, later Father Vincent, corroborated his Superior's observations. His duties exposed him to possible embarrassment; not yet able to command priestly respect, the seminarian had only an imperfect knowledge of English and was responsible for the conduct of the students in his position as supervisor. However, in this situation, it was the kindness and generosity of the boys that impressed the young cleric: "they are good and obliging, not as mischievous

³⁰Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Raynaud,
September 9, 1852, p.3.

³¹Ibid.

³²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille,
March 29, 1857, p.2.

³³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to a Confrère,
May 16, 1853, p.3.

as our boys at Annonay...not at all the mocking kind."³⁴
 That he met with little trouble of a disciplinary nature
 is gathered from his comment: "supervision doesn't
 present the same difficulty here as it does in France."³⁵

These good qualities were fostered by the Community's
 pedagogical methods which combined discipline with prudence.
 The expulsion of a day student who served as a messenger
 between a girl and a boarder indicated that discipline was
 firm, yet not unduly so from 1850 standards.³⁶ Discipline
 was meted out fairly and quickly while such a method as
 scolding was discouraged as "it is not corrective but leaves
 only incurable wounds."³⁷

To assume that teacher-student relations were perfectly blissful at St. Michael's perpetually, would be an indirect rejection of the existence of human nature and, though the students possessed endearing qualities, they also exhibited the spirit of independence characteristic of their environment. To these were added the vices ascribed to the Irish "of violence, laziness and passion which made

³⁴Rev. C. Vincent, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille,
 January 22, 1853, p.3.

³⁵Ibid., p.4.

³⁶Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille,
 July 5, 1855, p.3.

³⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne,
 1855, p.2.

the road of education thorny."³⁸ The attraction of spirits to persons of Celtic ancestry was not obliterated by attendance at St. Michael's. Despite the fact that the students, all with good intentions, took the pledge against drinking and despite the good example set by the Fathers, Father Soulerin was forced to take firm action with a boy discovered under the influence of alcohol.³⁹ Moreover a constant vigilance on the part of the authorities was maintained at all times to prevent the students from chattering with girls, whose religious exercises at St. Basil's brought them into occasional contact with the St. Michael's boys.⁴⁰ It was against these occasional misdemeanours that the Fathers had to direct their attention. The students, restless and independent, yet paradoxically submissive and generous, required a patient supervision, a prudent discipline and religious instruction which in 1857 was augmented by the introduction of an annual retreat preceding the feast of Easter.

³⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, July 5, 1855, p.5.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., March 29, 1857, p.2.

CHAPTER VII

PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH THE EXTENSION OF BASILIAN ACTIVITIES

Of the problems confronting the Community during 1850-1860, some were of such major proportions that the continuance of Basilian residence in Canada depended on their solution. Such was the problem of location. Other problems were of a peripheral nature, sometimes scarcely perceptible but nevertheless capable of either impeding the realization of the principal aims of the Community or of sowing seeds of discord between Episcopal authority and the Congregation. These latter effects became evident when the Community extended its activities to include the administration of a parish in Weston and of a newly established college in Sandwich, now Windsor.

Exclusive of the primary work of the Basilian Community, the Fathers engaged in a multiplicity of activities which ranged from rendering assistance to the victims of the 1854 cholera epidemic to the providing of chaplains for the nearby convents and the military garrison. There were retreats for the sisters and for the laity and there were frequent addresses to literary societies and sermons for special occasions. The St. Patrick's Day festivities always required the attendance

of the Fathers, and from 1855 to 1859, due to the location of Parliament in Toronto, the delegates from Canada East came to depend on the Fathers for their religious instruction. During the protracted absences of the bishop, the diocesan correspondence and the chancery work usually became the responsibility of the Basilian Superior.

It was, however, in the field of the external ministry that the Fathers devoted most of their time when free from class-room duties. At first, their work was confined to the city of Toronto with the Cathedral and St. Mary's the centre of their activity, but by 1853 their ministerial labours took the Fathers to Port Credit, Brock, St. Catharines, Newmarket, Brantford and virtually every hamlet in the vast Toronto diocese. The longer missionary expeditions, of course, occurred during the summer vacation period. The plan to establish a mission centre had been broached in 1853 by Father Soulerin but the small number of Basilians made the proposal impractical at that time.

Though the establishment of a mission centre or parish, under Basilian supervision, did not become a reality until 1863 with the founding of the Owen Sound parish, the Community did have the administration of a parish before this. In 1853 Bishop Charbonnel established a parish in Weston, then a village, some ten miles northwest of Toronto. Lacking sufficient priests for a resident

pastor, the parish was entrusted temporarily to the care of the Basilians, and early in 1853 "Reverend Father Molony and the Superior of the Seminary were appointed to come out to Weston to choose the view and make plans of it to present his Lordship."¹ True to their agreement, Fathers Soulerin and Molony visited Weston and approved a site for the construction of a church which was to serve the residents not only of Weston but of the neighbouring localities of Burwick, Pine Grove, Kleinburg and Clareville.² On September 17, 1854, the church at Weston was officially opened.³ That the Basilians had expended a great deal of effort in the spiritual development of the parish, as well as the temporal, is indicated by a letter of Father Soulerin in late August 1854. Leaving the Palace Sunday morning, August 14, 1854, Fathers Soulerin and Vincent covered the ten miles by horse and carriage; the superior said mass in a hotel attended by sixty Irish Catholics, while Father Vincent said mass an hour later for a larger congregation. They remained overnight and on the next day, the feast of the Assumption, so great a congregation came

¹Patrick D'Arcy, Letter to John Elmsley, January 8, 1853, Letter Book, p.28

²Ibid.

³"New Church in Weston", article in The Catholic Mirror, Vol. 17, September 8, 1854, p.2. col. 2.

to the Sacraments and Mass that the Fathers were unable to breakfast until well on in the afternoon.⁴

From 1853 to 1857 Weston was attended by the Community, in the person of Father Flannery who, after his ordination, was assigned to administer the parish. Because of his teaching schedule and the demands of the faithful in Toronto, Father Flannery was able only to minister to the needs of his parish on alternate Sundays.⁵ So devoted to him did his parishioners become, that they offered him a purse, on learning of his contemplated visit to Ireland in 1857.⁶ After the departure of the popular pastor the care of the parish was given to Father Vincent and the recently ordained Father Northgraves.⁷

In itself the administration of the Weston parish was a work which appealed to the Fathers because of the spiritual needs of the faithful living in the locality, but in conjunction with the multiplicity of problems so evident during the decade, and especially in the trying period 1852-1856, it was simply an additional responsibility affixed to the sagging shoulders of the Fathers.

⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, August 20, 1854, p.2.

⁵Ibid., November 23, 1856, p.2.

⁶"Departure of Popular Pastor", article in The Catholic Mirror, Vol. 20, July 17, 1857, p.2. col. 3.

⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Superior General, October 12, 1859, p.3.

Whereas the parochial problems at Weston merely engendered extra responsibilities for the Community, the proposed Basilian administration of Assumption College generated anxieties of an alarming nature in that it threatened to strain the good relationship existing between Community and Bishop as well as enkindling the smouldering embers of friction between Community superior and bursar.

Through the efforts of Father Point and his fellow Jesuit missionaries in the Sandwich area, the construction of Assumption College was commenced in 1855 and completed in 1857. Once completed the responsibility of teaching was undertaken by the Jesuit Fathers and the ecclesiastical students of the recently consecrated Bishop Pinsonneault of London. The Sandwich area was composed of a majority of Catholics of French ancestry and as a consequence the common public school was Catholic while the separate school was Protestant. The common school was immediately located in Assumption College and soon the prospectus of the institution advertised that "English and French are placed on the same footing...courses are offered in three departments, primary, classical and mercantile."⁸

⁸Assumption College "Prospectus", advertisement in the Catholic Mirror, Vol.20, July 31, 1857, p.2. col.1.

This was a similar curriculum to St. Michael's save that the term 'mercantile' was used in place of commercial.

That the college was in operation by March 1857 is evident from a letter of protest by the Reverend Edward Dewar, rector of the Anglican church in Sandwich. His complaint centred around the fact that

....the Roman Catholics have lately erected and opened a college, which is, of course, under the direction of priests...they have made the Common school the preparatory or primary department of the College.⁹

The college was under the direction of the Jesuits for about seven months, that is, until November 1857, when the London bishop transferred the office of superior to Father Malbos.

In 1857, the St. Michael's bursar found himself involved in two controversies, one with his Superior over the rule and the extent of bursar's powers and the other with the Vicar General, Father Bruyere, over the financial report of St. Michael's College and St. Basil's Church.¹⁰ Neither Father Soulerin nor Father Bruyere wanted Father Malbos to return to France, yet both they and Bishop Charbonnel were anxious that he be replaced as bursar. With matters

⁹J. G. Hodgins. Letter of Rev. Dewar to Egerton Ryerson, March 12, 1857, in Documental History, Vol. 13, p. 177.

¹⁰Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Rev. Bruyere, August 17, 1857, Letter Book, p.81.

standing thus, a request came to the Superior General, through Father Soulerin, from Bishop Pinsonneault for a priest to take charge of the seven months old College of the Assumption. To Father Tourvieille this appeared as an excellent solution to the perplexing rule problem and he wrote to Bishop Charbonnel:

Providence is coming to our aid...the Bishop of London is asking for a subject to be put at the head of an establishment...Father Soulerin told him he was waiting word for me...I am answering Father Soulerin, leaving the matter to his judgment.¹¹

Bishop Charbonnel did not take kindly to Father Malbos' departure for Sandwich, feeling that the new college would curtail the work of his own Toronto foundation. Since he was in France when he was informed, there was little he could do about it, save protest to Father Tourvieille who had already instructed the Toronto superior to proceed with the affair as he thought best. The General's reply supplied the motive of the affair:

I had not the least desire to leave Father Malbos in Toronto against your will, nor did I like to send him into a mission in Canada...the wisest move seemed to leave the whole matter to the judgment, prudence and devotion of Father Soulerin.¹²

The opposition of the Toronto bishop, to the Basilians going to Sandwich, had preceded the appointment of

¹¹Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, September 30, 1857, p.2.

¹²Ibid., November 24, 1857, p.1.

Father Malbos in 1857. The Concordat revision of November 1855 gave witness of the episcopal dissatisfaction of the supposed interest of the Community in the Sandwich college. Since there are no references to Sandwich in any of the Basilian letters prior to 1857 and since the construction of Assumption College was only commenced in the summer of 1855, a time when Sandwich was still part of the Toronto diocese and a period when the entire Basilian Community in Canada was devoting its energies to the construction of St. Michael's, it is extremely interesting and puzzling to know how Bishop Charbonnel gained information on the real or supposed interest of the Community in Sandwich by 1855. Equally surprising was the bishop's refusal, in the Concordat revision, to countenance any Basilian appeal or explanation.¹³ Baffling, too, were the reasons prompting Bishop Pinsonneault to make overtures to the Basilian Fathers for at best he had only a passing acquaintance with the Community. On receipt of Bishop Charbonnel's plan for the support of St. Michael's College, Father Pinsonneault, then the archdeacon of Montreal, replied in November 1854 commending "any plan towards the support of our dear St. Michael's College."¹⁴

¹³cf. Appendix 4, p.229.

¹⁴Pinsonneault, op. cit., p.70

This reference to 'our dear College' by a Montreal priest, two years before the establishment of London as a diocese is somewhat surprising. Possibly the future erection of the London diocese under the metropolitanship of Toronto, and his own appointment as bishop, had been already indicated to Father Pinsonneault; at any rate, his only direct contact with the Basilians came when he was present for the ceremonies connected with the opening of St. Michael's.

The tenure of Father Malbos' superiorship at Assumption lasted from November 1857 to October 1858.¹⁵ During the period, Father Malbos had the assistance of the Jesuit Fathers in a teaching capacity, at least till the summer of 1858. Their departure for missionary work was feared by the General who felt "it would be a tragedy if the Jesuits do not stay on longer."¹⁶ The Jesuits did remain longer-- longer, in fact, than Father Malbos whose abrupt withdrawal, in October 1858, terminated the first Basilian administration of Assumption College. It is fairly evident that the factors motivating Father Malbos' departure centred around staff clashes, opposition from certain quarters in the London diocese and the very strong disapproval of Bishop Charbonnel.

¹⁵The last letter written to Father Tourvielle from Sandwich is dated October 18, 1858.

¹⁶Rev. P. Tourvielle, Letter to Rev. J. Malbos, August 23, 1858, p.2.

That faculty friction existed at Assumption during the administration of the former St. Michael's bursar is evident from the attitude of Father Tourvieille on learning of Father Malbos' departure: "he thought he could subdue his subordinates and he was wrong."¹⁷ A year later when Bishop Pinsonneault wrote a personal letter to Father Malbos, then in Annonay, he urged that if a colony of Basilians was to be sent to Sandwich "Father Malbos should be one of the number but as bursar or professor, and not as superior."¹⁸

Of an equally serious nature was the opposition Father Malbos experienced within the London diocese. Without the solid support of all, it was impossible to attract students in sufficient numbers to assure the success of the College. Evidence of the exact nature of this opposition is lacking, though "the presence of Father Bruyere at Sandwich is not encouraging to Father Malbos...Father Bruyere had many disagreements with our confrère at Toronto."¹⁹ Later on, when Father O'Connor, a Basilian, was appraising the prospects of Assumption College, he regarded, as a

¹⁷Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Rev. J. Soulerin, November 22, 1858, p.2.

¹⁸Bishop Pinsonneault, Letter to Rev. J. Malbos, September 21, 1859, p.2. (Preserved in Basilian Archives, Annonay, France.)

¹⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Actorie, July 21, 1860, p.3.

hopeful sign, the disappearance "of the opposing elements which existed in the time of Father Malbos."²⁰

Possibly more serious than either of the preceding reasons was the opposition manifested by Bishop Charbonnel towards Basilians going to Sandwich. His revision of the Concordat revenues, his several protests to Father Tourvieille made his attitude quite plain to both Community and Bishop Pinsonneault. When the latter was going ahead with plans to install the Basilians in Sandwich on a fuller scale, he asked Father Soulerin "under no condition to divulge them to the Toronto bishop."²¹

It is not surprising, then, that in the face of these difficulties Father Malbos concluded that the time for the establishment of a Basilian house at Sandwich was not ripe and thus he terminated his attempt to administer Assumption College. Though the Sandwich College permanently passed into Basilian hands in 1870, the first experiment of 1857 - 1858 caused the development of unfriendly relations between Bishop Charbonnel and the Community: "the sad affair of Sandwich

²⁰Rev. D. O'Connor, Letter to Rev. J. Soulerin, August 24, 1868, p.2.

²¹Bishop Pinsonneault, Letter to Rev. J. Soulerin, September 28, 1858, p.2.

College offended Bishop Charbonnel, causing him to change his attitude towards us and prejudicing Bishop Lynch (successor of Bishop Charbonnel) against us.²²

As superior of St. Michael's, Father Soulerin was left entirely in charge of the expansion program by the Superior General. It was he who made the arrangements and after Father Malbos had gone to Assumption, the Toronto superior had both to accept the responsibility for the appointment and to bear the brunt of Bishop Charbonnel's annoyance. He was in the position of being able to show no enthusiasm in public for what was largely his own idea.

The effects of the very nearly disastrous Assumption expansion project were quite clear. Episcopal disapproval was reflected in the action of the Toronto primate, while his fellow ecclesiastic in London was disappointed and began a campaign in his native Montreal for an adequate faculty. If the period prior to 1856 was fraught with problems of acclimatization and construction, the period which introduced the 1860's was replete with episcopal feelings toward the Community that were tantamount to distrust. Moreover, it seemed that the little Community was on the verge of

²²Rev. J. Soulerin, Memoirs. p.3.

extinction with the permanent departure from St. Michael's of Fathers Flannery, Molony and Malbos. Their withdrawal was largely the result of disagreements with the superior over conflicting interpretations of rule and vows--in short a spiritual problem to be treated immediately.

CHAPTER VIII

SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS

At all times between 1850-1860 there loomed before the Community, and especially the Toronto superior, the difficulties that we may term spiritual problems. In brief, they included the matters of interpreting the Basilian vows or promises, of securing vocations and of solving the discipline enigma. This latter difficulty, increased by the novel circumstances, the increased work and the strange customs of a new location, centred largely around the superior's efforts to secure a working rule and its enforcement, while maintaining some conformity with the traditions at Annonay. The vexing problem of defining the extent of the bursar's powers threatened to endanger the harmony expected in a religious community while it added to the cares of the superior, already overburdened by problems of an external nature.

Before considering such a delicate problem as the internal administration of a religious house and the attitude of the Fathers towards their rule it is of utmost importance to appreciate the circumstances in which the Community members found themselves. Being human beings, they were subject to the heritage of their first parents. Striving to

secure perfection through their work with the aid of Providence, they could be guilty of faults great and small. That they might offend their God and their confrères through petty jealousies and dishonesties or by tale-bearing and uncharitableness or by disagreeableness, possible even in the best of circumstances, would surprise only the unrealistic.

The Basilian Community in Toronto, during the period 1850-1860, did not experience many pleasant circumstances. It was not until 1856 that it had a dwelling of its own; the climate, language and the myriad of difficulties of a major and minor nature were added to an extremely excessive and overburdening work program which needs no reiteration. In the face of the circumstances, astonishment should not be exhibited over the natural desire for rule relaxation, or evasion, but rather, gratitude should be expressed at the supernatural support which made possible the continuance of Community life and the permanence of the infant foundation in Toronto.

The development of the Basilian Fathers from a group of priests living together bound by a rule and to a Community or Congregation was a slow and gradual evolution, completed only in the twentieth century. The original Fathers received a rule from Bishop D'Aviau governing only their life as teachers. In 1822 the Fathers agreed to bind themselves

to certain promises, but not vows in the modern sense of the word. They agreed to lead a common life with its pious exercises and its common table. New candidates were required to spend a year of novitiate at Annonay after which they agreed to submit to the rules of the College and to make the four promises of poverty, obedience, chastity and stability. The promise of poverty allowed the member to receive 200 francs salary for his clothing and relaxation. In addition, the member obtained about 300 francs from his mass stipends and was free to accept gifts or donations without acknowledging them to his superior, though he was advised not to accumulate any surplus beyond a year's duration. The members obeyed the Superior not as in a religious order but merely as professors to the ecclesiastic superior of the College in which they taught. This allowed much free time beyond the common exercises and of course carried no obligation to perform duties of the external ministry. Stability entailed the constant performance of the ecclesiastical and educational responsibilities. By this promise the member agreed not to withdraw from the society without advising the superior of his intention three years in advance and of renewing the demand each year in writing. Celibacy, of course, was binding from Church Law.

During the summer of 1852, at the very time that

Fathers Soulerin and Malbos and Messrs. Vincent and Flannery were embarking for Canada, a chapter of the Basilian Fathers was in progress. Another step in the evolution of the Fathers towards a religious congregation was taken at this chapter by the decision to introduce the taking of four vows in place of four promises. It was a large step for the Fathers to take, for previously it was a relatively simple matter for a member to leave the Community after ordination; with the introduction of vows, perpetuity of the members in the common life was established. The matter of the vows was very similar to the matter of the promises, only the nature differed.¹ The vow of stability, presently merged in that of obedience, was in existence in 1860 as Father Soulerin wrote; "Since my last letter Denis O'Connor made his four vows according to the formula sent from France."² The individual member could still obtain a salary and retain mass stipends and gifts. The common table and lodging was provided for the members through the tuition fees of students or the sale of

¹Information on the vows was obtained largely from two letters, one from Rev. Descellierie in Annonay to Rev. R. Scollard in Toronto, 1940 and the other from Rev. Roume, present Superior of the French Basilians, to the author, January 29, 1955.

²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Actorie, July 21, 1860, p.3.

community property which was deposited in the Community treasury. Needless to say, the priest members were urged to take these vows immediately.

It became the recommended practice of taking vows only after ordination to the priesthood, though exceptions were made. In October 1859, Father Soulerin explained that "two or three who entered the novitiate last year will be able to take their vows; although they are not in Sacred Orders, we can prudently count on them."³

No one can read the early letters of the Fathers to their confrères in France without realizing the peculiar trials to the priesthood to be found in Canada. To cope with these trials, Father Soulerin felt that the taking of vows was a vital necessity: "the matter of vows is important: we need them more than in France; even with this salutary remedy, the priests may not resist the temptations of the spirit of pride and independence."⁴ Besides these two dangers, Father Malbos diagnosed the generosity and warm-heartedness of the Irish laity towards priests as a possible danger: "here the people are too attached to priests who, in turn, are quite sensible to marks of affection."⁵ The fear of constant and

³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Superior General, October 12, 1859, p.2.

⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 4, 1853, p.4.

⁵Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 21, 1852, p.2.

protracted visiting of the laity might result in the abandonment of Community by the members. There was a fear too that even the external ministerial work with its occasional consolations and above all its accompanying freedom of action and virtual independence might prove irresistible to the Basilian without vows. This fear was augmented by the attitude of Bishop Charbonnel which was fashioned on his diocesan needs and, though he, in nowise interfered, "feared that the vows will separate us from external work with his subjects"⁶ From the variety of complex reasons, it seemed essential that the vows be taken by the three Basilian priests in Canada immediately and by Messrs. Flannery and Vincent at their ordination. In October 1852, Father Soulerin requested that the formulary for vows be sent so he might acquaint his subjects with their nature and matter and thus expedite their reception by the Fathers.⁷ On November 21, 1852, Fathers Soulerin and Malbos complied with the wishes of the General and took their vows, though Father Molony hesitated on the plea of needing more thought.⁸ However, a letter of Father Soulerin indicated that after November 21,

⁶Ibid.

⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, October 1, 1852, p.3.

⁸Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 21, 1852, p.3.

1852, and before January 23, 1853, Father Molony had also acceded to the General's request:

....in my last letter there was a record of all our vows duly signed...now we are all really Basilians...⁹ I hope Messrs. Flannery and Vincent will follow our example when their time comes.⁹

Since 'all' signed and since the two clerics were enjoined to follow 'our' example it can be prudently assumed that Father Molony was 'really a Basilian' also.

Shortly after Easter, on May 22, 1853, Messrs. Flannery and Vincent were ordained priests and were expected to take Basilian vows. However, from the outset Father Flannery was reluctant to do so and this presented one more problem for the Father Superior. Writing to Father Tourvieille June, 1853, Father Flannery indicated that he had spent the time prior to his ordination meditating on the dignity of the priesthood rather than on vows: "moreover I didn't make my novitiate with the intention of taking vows."¹¹ Father Flannery remained in the Community in this fashion for four more years, during which time he laboured in the classroom and in the external ministry at Weston but it soon became evident that his real interest was in the parochial sphere.

⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, January 23, 1853, p.4.

¹⁰Rev. P. Flannery, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, June 5, 1853, p.2.

¹¹Ibid.

By 1857, his letter to the General indicated his growing dissatisfaction: "I am neither Basilian nor secular... I must conform to all the rules of a religious and at the same time have the work and responsibility of a secular."¹² Stressing the need of the people of Canada West for missionaries, coupled with the fear of scruples certain to follow his reception of vows, Father Flannery decided "with regret and after long reflection not to join the Community."¹³ During the summer of 1857 he returned to his native Ireland for a short vacation and spent the rest of his priestly life in Canada in diocesan work at Pickering and St. Thomas. His departure was sorely felt by the Community, already pressed for faculty members.

With Father Vincent, the hesitancy in taking vows was prompted by considerations of his own self-styled, spiritual frailty. In his letter of December 1856 he acknowledged his inability to keep the rules, the gravest of which was his failure to rise promptly.¹⁴ Father Vincent felt possible spiritual disaster to himself and scandal to the confrères should "he dare to bind himself to reach perfection by strict

¹²Ibid., March 29, 1853, p.1.

¹³Ibid., p.3.

¹⁴Rev. C. Vincent, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 20, 1856, p.2.

and severe paths when he fulfilled his ordinary obligations so badly."¹⁵ Through the wise counsels of Father Soulerin, Father Vincent accepted vows before May, 1857, as indicated by his letter to the General of that month.¹⁶

To the problem of vow reception, poverty difficulties, arising from a too meagre salary, became evident. The annual salary of 200 francs, augmented by mass stipends, made life at Annonay endurable, but in the face of higher Canadian costs the salary proved totally inadequate. Father Malbos' comparison was perhaps not too incongruous when he claimed that "we have as much money as rats have feathers."¹⁷ It was a fact however that the Fathers had less money than the domestics of the bishop.¹⁸ Even the prudent Superior realized the financial difficulties of Messrs. Flannery and Vincent before their ordination and requested that "their salaries be increased 100 francs because of the necessary expenses facing them."¹⁹

After considerable deliberation, the Toronto Community conjointly framed and sent a petition, in October 1855, to

¹⁵Ibid., p.3.

¹⁶Ibid., May 17, 1857, p.1.

¹⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, June 21, 1853, p.2.

¹⁸Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 20, 1853, p.2.

¹⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 5, 1853, p.2.

Annonay for an annual salary increase of 100 francs.²⁰ The Fathers based their demands on increased prices as well as the need for extra clothing, the result of both the rigorous climate and the Protestant atmosphere which frowned on the wearing of the ecclesiastical habit on the street. The lack of any relatives in Canada with whom the Fathers might otherwise have visited made the cost of brief vacations quite expensive. To the petition, Father Soulerin affixed an itemized account of expenses with the conclusion "we have absolutely nothing for travelling, books, small furniture or good works."²¹

The material advantages of the vow of poverty as accepted in more recent times by Basilians are shown most forcefully in the trying situation which faced the Fathers as they struggled with a vow permitting ownership and retention of salaries and gifts. That the petition received a favourable reply is clear from the later correspondence of the Toronto superior who remarked on the increased harmony among the Fathers "who received with gratefulness the increase of the annual grant."²²

²⁰Joint Petition of the Toronto Community to the Superior General, October 22, 1855, pp.1-3.

²¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Addition to Joint Petition, October 22, 1853, p.3.

²²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 16, 1856, p.1.

The matter of vocations was a constant source of worry to the Toronto superior. His hope was to supplement the five members of the Canadian foundation with native vocations, but it was evident that the fruition of this desire was reserved for some future time as the Community was virtually unknown in Canada West in 1852. Moreover, in the early formative years, the French customs and language of the Fathers could hardly be expected to attract vocations among the English-speaking Irish Catholics of the Toronto diocese.

The decade witnessed the employment of two distinct procedures by Father Soulerin in his efforts to cope with the vocation problem. Until 1856 he applied his energies towards attracting French Basilians, and particularly the younger ones, to the Canadian Foundation.²³ Not because of the lack of success accompanying these efforts but because of a fuller realization of Canadian circumstances, Father Soulerin, after 1856, began to campaign for native vocations even to the virtual exclusion of French and European ones.

The need of vocations to assist and continue the work of the Community was very apparent. Immigrants were

²³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Actorie, July 21, 1860, p.2. In this letter the Toronto Superior indicated that English was too hard for men of the fifty year old age group, to grasp.

arriving daily in Canada West from the British Isles and especially from Ireland. The progress of Toronto served to lure many of these immigrants. Already blessed with natural harbour facilities, the Queen City was fast becoming a centre of the rising Canadian industry and a hub of railway enterprise. Not only did the staff of St. Michael's need augmentation, but as the immigration continued unabated, the time was approaching for educational extension beyond the Toronto confines:

....here, there is so much good to be done...in a few years a number of educational establishments will be founded and the bishop will offer them to Communities with sufficient subjects.²⁴

Most of the early correspondence of Father Soulerin contained proposals for the adequate instruction of the Annonay students and ecclesiastics in English. This knowledge of English was a 'sine qua non' for any novices destined for Canada, in view of the British background of so many settlers in Canada West. To whet the zeal of the Basilian novices for the Canadian harvest, Fathers Vincent and Flannery were instructed to write about their missionary experiences. With detail, Father Flannery depicted his missionary endeavours of late August 1853, which began with preaching in St. Catharines and Niagara Falls. The carriage-

²⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, 1855, p.2.

ride along the Niagara gorge in the company of Father Vincent, and the train-ride to Buffalo, culminating with a brief two-day vacation with the Oblates located in the American city, were incidents likely to spark the imagination of novices.²⁵ The letter of Father Vincent dealt more with his missionary work in the Hamilton and Brantford regions prior to his meeting with Father Flannery. Between them, a picture of the dire need of priests in Canada was ornamented with a dash of the relaxation accorded a Basilian in his brief vacation period.

The pleas of the Toronto superior produced little tangible result. It was not that the Mother House proved deaf to the requests but rather that she herself was experiencing problems similar to those of her offshoot, as Father Tourvieille wrote: "1854 is a very menacing year for us; we are nearing the end of a European war...add to this the sterility of 1853."²⁶ However, this did not dampen the ardour of the persistent Father Soulerin. In September 1854, he remonstrated that "Canada needs Basilians far more than a little section of France."²⁷

²⁵Rev. P. Flannery, Letter to the Novices, August 1853, p.4.

²⁶Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Bishop Charbonnel, March 15, 1854, Letter Book, p.58

²⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to a Confrère, September 5, 1854, p.2.

In late 1854, the beginning of a definite alteration of vocation policy on the part of Father Soulerin became evident in his writings. Letters of this period no longer contain mere pleas for subjects but they insist that recruits possess certain requirements. Father Tourvieille was instructed only to "teach English to those who can come here and remain in the Community...don't bother to teach those who can't take it."²⁸ This change in Father Soulerin's policy resulted from a realization of the trying conditions facing young men accustomed to the old world civilization of Europe: "it is only here that I have been acquainted with the dangers to which the ecclesiastical state is exposed."²⁹ The Toronto superior feared that unless subjects were sent with vows "in two or three years they will have lost their vocations."³⁰

Toward the end of 1855 the change in Father Soulerin's policy was completed. He, no longer, sought recruits from Europe as he felt that many were incapable of gaining their salvation:

...when they come into contact with the sensuality and worldliness which is in the air, the air of America...how many deplorable downfalls we have seen

²⁸Ibid., December 5, 1854, p.2.

²⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 18, 1855, p.3.

³⁰Ibid., July 1855, p.2.

since our arrival...it would have been a thousand times better if those poor priests had not left Europe.³¹

To the moral dangers facing the European ecclesiastic in a foreign country, Father Soulerin felt that the tempo and activity of America was beyond the grasp of the Annonay trained priest: "we are in a country with an incredible activity...it seems to me that our confrères in France do not have enough life."³²

No doubt, it cost Father Soulerin a great deal of time, thought and observation to arrive at this decision, in view of the imminent construction of the new St. Michael's and especially at a time when he could not "see a single one among all our boys who will follow us."³³ It was a keen disappointment for the active superior to witness the defection, through parental counsel, of both Messrs. Rooney and O'Dea, who had earlier indicated their desire to join the Community: "here, as in France, the families consider themselves happy to have a priest, but interest motivates them as well as faith."³⁴

³¹Ibid., November 14, 1855, p.3.

³²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Actorie, July 21, 1860, p.3.

³³Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to P. Tourvieille, November 4, 1854, p.2.

³⁴Ibid., August 8, 1854, p.2.

During the transition period of Father Soulerin, he outlined the requisites for a Basilian vocation. To simplicity, piety and average intelligence he requested a "basic knowledge of science, mathematics and an ordinary acquaintance with latin and greek."³⁵ Together with these positive requirements, the Toronto superior cautioned that "the violent and ambitious will never succeed in the Basilian Community ...goodness, sweetness and simplicity are indispensable."³⁶

Just prior to the opening of St. Michael's, Father Soulerin expressed some satisfaction over the results of his policy aimed at attracting Canadian vocations: "we have some intelligent and well-disposed young men, who may request to join us...I prefer them in most respects to subjects coming from France."³⁷ Though the sun was not to shine immediately on this optimistic observation of the Toronto superior, he was justified in his appreciation of European candidates. The only member to join the Community in this category was Mr. Louis Gibra; not only did he leave the Congregation shortly after his ordination, but he spread

³⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, 1855, p.3.

³⁶Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Superior General, October 12, 1859, p.2.

³⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, 1855, p.3.

falsehoods about it to Bishop Lynch and directly caused the Fathers many anxious moments in the early 1860's.³⁸

Fortunately for the life of the Community and to act as staff replacements, Canadian novices in the persons of Messrs. Mulcahy, Ferguson, McCarthy, Walsh and O'Connor, applied for admission towards the end of the 1850 decade. These were the forerunners of an increasing number of vocations in the 1860's and their character was of such high calibre that Father Soulerin wrote "we do not need any foreign subjects.....we find sufficient here who respond better to the principal object of our work, teaching."³⁹ Some concern was expressed because "they are all young and nearly the same age.....it will be difficult to get heads for our new colonies."⁴⁰ To forestall this difficulty, Father Soulerin generously asked to remain in Canada long enough to inculcate the new members in the Basilian way of life. It was not until 1865 that the Toronto Superior was recalled to France and then for the purpose of assuming the office of Superior General.

³⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Memoirs, p.4.

³⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Superior General,
October 12, 1859, p.3.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Not only had Father Soulerin cemented the foundation of the Fathers in Canada, but by his wise counsels and prudent estimation of new world conditions, he laid the framework for the future development of Basilian enterprise in Canada. Perhaps his appreciation of the defects resulting from the Annonay 'apathy' and his determination to indoctrinate the Canadian subjects with a spirit of zeal, so evident in his emphasis on missionary work joined with teaching, is best justified by the growth of the Community in Canada and in the United States.⁴¹

From our study so far, one thing stands out with clarity--the tremendously influential role of the superior in either solving the problems of the Toronto Community or in tactfully reducing them to virtual insignificance. Faced with enormous troubles, worries and difficulties, Father Soulerin might well have expected to find solace and comfort, or at least a haven of retreat from these daily struggles, in the company of his confrères. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case as the superior was faced with problems of discipline and rule violation. It was not that the Toronto superior was a harsh man who exhibited tyrannical characteristics; on the contrary, he was prudent and generous.

⁴¹Today there are approximately 500 Basilians in Canada and the United States.

Of the many instances that could be cited, his intercessory arguments to the General, on behalf of Father Vincent's proposed parental visit at a time when the Basilian staff was on the verge of depletion, best illustrates his humaneness.⁴²

That Father Soulerin realized the enormous task and the increased labours facing the Community in Toronto, was very apparent:

....in Europe a teacher after he completes three or four hours of regular class is free for the day... also on Sundays and holy days....here it is completely different and from the multiplicity of occupations each priest has been charged with, there has naturally resulted a certain irregularity which we will not attribute totally to laziness.⁴³

Father Soulerin foresaw that living in another's house, even though a Palace, would generate restlessness among the confreres: "Knowing the situation as I do, I don't think we can maintain harmony for even two months in the Palace."⁴⁴ Though there is no attempt made to beatify the Toronto superior, we cannot escape the fact that he was a conscientious priest, tactful, patient and generous. Though scarcely more than a stranger to Toronto, his ability and prudence were so evident that Bishop

⁴²Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, February 13, 1856. p.2.

⁴³Rev. J. Soulerin, Memoirs, p.1.

⁴⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, January 23, 1853. p.1.

Charbonnel appointed him as administrator of the diocese when occasion required the episcopal presence in Europe.⁴⁵ It was no small tribute to the superior's ability to have the bishop refer to him as "a pierre angulaire" - his task is great.⁴⁶ That he maintained the episcopal confidence is illustrated from his reappointment as diocesan administrator during the 1857-58 absence of Bishop Charbonnel. Difficult as it is to assess the spirituality of any man, it is impossible to ignore Father Soulerin's adherence to the rule and his respect for authority. Despite the most violent accusations levelled at him, his spiritual life and his regularity were never attacked. His firm belief was that "no society, empire or religious institute could work without a real and profound respect for authority."⁴⁷ Just as he expected his authority to be respected by his confrères, Father Soulerin wrote that "with the grace of God, I will continue to respect the authority of my superiors."⁴⁸ In failing to accuse the Superior of harshness or of possessing a power-conscious complex, his disgruntled assailants (confrères) indirectly vindicated him from any

⁴⁵Ibid., December, 1852, p.1.

⁴⁶Bishop Charbonnel, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, December 5, 1855, p.1.

⁴⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 14, 1855, p.2.

⁴⁸Ibid.

fastidiousness or virulence. Nor was there any attempt on the part of Father Soulerin to commence any reform movement; his object was in his own words: "not to change the rule, but only to enforce it."⁴⁹ Above all, he realized with Father Flannery that "a good European priest is a very ordinary one here --- one must be a saint here to be a priest."⁵⁰ Fears for the eternal salvation of his confrères prompted Father Soulerin, as was his duty, to see that the Basilian rule was practised so that all might "avoid the dangers to which the ecclesiastical state is exposed here --- this is the greatest of my worries."⁵¹ It was natural for the Toronto Basilians, realizing the increased amount of their work compared to that of their European confrères, to seek some relaxation. What they failed to realize was that when this relaxation conflicted with the rule of the Community, the result would be a weakening of their determination to achieve their religious ideal and perhaps ultimate disaster to their spiritual life. Father Soulerin, too, experienced these same desires for relaxation. "I was tempted to join my own complaints to those of the discontented."⁵² However, the Toronto superior

⁴⁹Ibid., April 18, 1854, p.2.

⁵⁰Rev. P. Flannery, Letter to the Novices, Easter, 1853, p.3.

⁵¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, September 18, 1855, p.3.

⁵²Ibid., November 14, 1855, p.2.

exhibited the qualities of the ideal leader not only in realizing the possible calamitous results of such procedure by his confrères or himself but in firmly attempting to prevent the intrusion or laxity within the cloister.

In endeavouring to harmonize the rule with the new Canadian conditions, Father Soulerin met with a general opposition which ranged from occasional minor objections on the part of Father Vincent to more serious rule infractions by the usually zealous Fathers Molony and Flannery and finally to Father Malbos' cold, calculated hostility which was motivated by jealousy and prompted by vanity. One of the earliest references to rule violation is contained in a letter of Father Soulerin in August 1853. After asserting that the exercises are performed at the same time and in the same way as at Annonay, the Toronto superior bemoaned the occasional late rising and the frequency of visits between the confrères and the laity both at the palace and at the homes of the faithful.⁵³ Shortly before, the Toronto Superior had asked the General to issue a disciplinary letter which would emphasize the necessity of refraining from useless visits with the laity and especially "of avoiding all familiarity with young people of the opposite sex and of always being very brief

⁵³ Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to a Confrère, August 13, 1853, p.2.

with them."⁵⁴ That the General did conform with the Superior's request is indicated by Father Malbos' displeasure: "he was outspoken in saying that your circular originated here and was sent back from Annonay."⁵⁵ That the disciplinary letter did not have a permanent effect was evident from the fact that the visiting, without permission, continued: "I do not like these gentlemen returning several times a week at 9 in the evening after having dreamed or chatted."⁵⁶ Father Malbos perhaps was the most guilty in this respect as "he is not here in the day and he goes out without reporting it --- there is nothing I can do, such is the character of this man."⁵⁷

The practice of refraining from liquors in conformity with the bishop's request was observed only until the middle of 1853.⁵⁸ In fact, the close association between drinking and visiting was a partial reason for Father Soulerin's opposition to the latter. However, so far as drinking in the house was concerned: "the excesses are not feared, as no one ever goes beyond good-fellowship

⁵⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 5, 1853, p.2.

⁵⁵Ibid., May 16, 1853, p.2.

⁵⁶Ibid., April 18, 1854, p.2.

⁵⁷Ibid., April 6, 1856, p.3.

⁵⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to a Confrère, May 16, 1853, p.1.

in our house."⁵⁹

Excessive card playing was evident both in 1854 and 1855 and was defended "by Father Malbos as the only way to prevent the teachers from going out."⁶⁰ Because this custom kept the teachers needlessly away from the students, Father Soulerin wrote "I am formally opposed to it."⁶¹

Unconsciously the spirit of acquisitiveness, characteristic of the young country, was beginning to endanger the Fathers as "they receive money for Sunday ministry and are much more eager to go out into the parishes."⁶² The superior attempted to reduce this spirit by limiting the parish work, though always careful not to conflict with the needs of the diocese.⁶³ The straightened financial circumstances of the Fathers led them to solicit gifts from the very generous Irish Catholics.⁶⁴ Since the accumulating of these gifts militated against the common life and could also cause dissension, Father Soulerin felt it was an evil, but because it was not expressly forbidden by the vow of poverty, he could only claim "it is a delicate problem and something must be done, though I do not know

⁵⁹ Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, November 17, 1855, p.2.

⁶⁰ Ibid., October 21, 1855, p.2.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, August 16, 1855, p.2.

⁶³ Ibid., p.3.

⁶⁴ Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 6, 1856, p.1.

what."⁶⁵

Faced with continual rule violations and realizing that his strict enforcement of them would result in the departure of the confrères, Father Soulerin asked for a formal rule interpretation together with a special directive for Father Malbos. In addition, he advised the General that visits in the parlour should not extend beyond 7:30 p.m. in the winter and 8 p.m. in the summer.⁶⁶ The reply to the superior's appeal was written before October 1856 and an extract was submitted by the General to Bishop Charbonnel.⁶⁷ Visits were permitted with the Superior's permission but were not to extend beyond 7:00 p.m.. Frequent clandestine meetings for purposes of eating or drinking were expressly forbidden as were meetings 'solus cum sola' with members of the opposite sex. Priestly garb was to be worn at all times. Despite the seriousness of the instruction, the rule was only observed for a short time and the problem returned for Father Soulerin early in 1857 who sadly recounted that "the goings against the rule continue and religious exercises are often neglected."⁶⁸ Fortunately the problem disappeared before the end of 1857 with the exodus of Fathers Malbos, Molony and Flannery to

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., p.2.

⁶⁷Appendix 7, p. 236

⁶⁸Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvielle, March 29, 1857, p.2.

Assumption College, France and Ireland respectively. It is interesting to note that Father Vincent, doubtless the best rule keeper, remained at St. Michael's, an example of the adage common in religious houses, to the effect that the rule will protect and keep the one who keeps the rule. Moreover, it is small wonder that Father Soulerin altered his policy regarding the solicitation of European vocations for the Toronto foundation: "I prefer the young men here...they do what I want and never say no which is quite different from my confrères."⁶⁹

Father Vincent from the time of his arrival in Canada as an ecclesiastic always exhibited a "calm and deliberative quality."⁷⁰ Inclined to be somewhat scrupulous, as evidenced by his initial fears of taking vows because of his tendency to oversleep, he was referred to by his superior as "this good confrère who is so useful."⁷¹ Virtually, the only apparent defect he possessed was his early hesitancy to speak English at table and at recreation, and he thus earned the displeasure of Father Soulerin who

⁶⁹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, 1855, p.2.

⁷⁰Ibid., p.4.

⁷¹Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, February 13, 1856, p.3.

admitted he "got a little mad because Father Vincent speaks French so often."⁷² Constantly worried by the sicknesses of his family, Father Vincent manifested exemplary obedience in waiting in excess of a year for permission to visit his parents. His presence in the Toronto establishment provided a solitary sensible solace to the troubled Superior, as he was "of all, the one who has the best spirit, minds his own business and is pleasant and pious."⁷³

In June 1857 Father Flannery returned to Europe, as he had left it, in the company of Father Vincent. Both were to visit their homes but whereas Father Vincent had permission and had accepted vows, Father Flannery had rejected the suggestion to formally enter the Community and left despite the pleas of Father Soulerin. In fact, had it not been for the generosity of the Weston parish, Father Flannery would have been unable to undertake the journey; as it was, Father Soulerin "would have refused him all authorization but this would have been a reason for his permanent departure from the needy missions in Canada."⁷⁴ A zealous man, Father Flannery had shown an early inclination for the work of the Community and in

⁷²Ibid., November 13, 1852, p.2.

⁷³Ibid., July 11, 1857, p.2.

⁷⁴Ibid., p.4.

1855 the superior wrote that "I am very pleased with the work and devotion of Father Flannery, though he is still very young in age and character."⁷⁵ The chief criticism that the Toronto superior noted in the Weston pastor was his fondness for liquor, though "he was very scrupulous not to drink in front of the boys."⁷⁶ During his five year period at St. Michael's, Father Flannery was torn between his gratitude to the Community and his zeal for the missions. That the latter offered him a freedom not to be obtained in the Community certainly prompted his ultimate decision to perform parish work as Father Soulerin wrote: "the very free life of the missionary tempts him."⁷⁷ He performed his teaching in an exemplary fashion but it was in the realm of parochial work that he was best fitted. It was impossible to combine both perfectly and his increasing disregard of the rules he attributed to this difficulty of harmonizing two vocations. Unfortunately for himself and the Community, he seems to have had two rather serious falls from grace of an unknown nature because the superior wrote just prior to Father Flannery's

⁷⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, 1855, p.3.

⁷⁶Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to a Confrère, May 16, 1853, p.2.

⁷⁷Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 29, 1857, p.3.

departure: "we are in a sort of crisis...Father Flannery has fallen again, though in a less gracious manner."⁷⁸

The fact that these falls could have been caused by the popular Weston pastor's inability to solve his dilemma did not reduce the problem of attendant scandal foisted on Father Soulerin. Appreciative of Father Flannery's work in the classroom, and conscious of his zeal, and even though troubled about his propensity to break rules, Father Soulerin opposed with his every effort, his young confrere's contemplated departure from St. Michael's.

The first Basilian to arrive in Canada had been Father Molony. This zealous priest had been loaned to the bishop to help him with the work of the ministry in Toronto. His chief duties were parochial but shortly after his arrival a church school was opened in the Cathedral and one of his assignments was to teach in it. He was also instrumental in arranging for the arrival of Father Soulerin and his little group in 1852. The ability and zeal of Father Molony were unquestioned; even before his abrupt departure for France in 1857 Father Soulerin wrote of him: "he is the busiest of all, he has the most advanced classes and most of the confessions."⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.2.

Shortly after the arrival of the Superior, Father Molony through reiterated demands received a discharge from the onerous labour of the Cathedral but unfortunately no sooner was he free from parish work than he began to regret his liberation to such an extent that "he became restless and discontented."⁸⁰ A further insight into the life of the zealous but impetuous cleric is afforded us in a letter of Father Soulerin of March 1853: "Father Molony has an overly kind and affectionate heart...his zeal is just as ardent... but he lacks prudence, especially in the confessional."⁸¹ This problem Father Soulerin felt was to be best solved by an Annonay instruction, to emphasize "the necessity of prudence, a reserve in our relations with the opposite sex."⁸² That Father Molony was not able to completely control the ardour of his generous nature is evident from the superior's report of 1855: "both Fathers Molony and Flannery like to drink and the older has never reduced that desire he had, when you knew him."⁸³

As Father Molony was seldom singled out as guilty of rule violations, his sudden departure to Annonay, in early July 1857, left Father Soulerin aghast: "when I

⁸⁰Ibid., p.2.

⁸¹Ibid., April 8, 1853, p.3.

⁸²Ibid., p.3.

⁸³Ibid., November 17, 1855, p.2.

came to Toronto it was particularly on him that I counted...I regret and deplore the cause of his leaving sadly."⁸⁴ Just four days prior to the sending of this message Father Soulerin, who had no inkling of the impending disaster and had reported on the good work of Father Molony, was forced to insert: "I fear he has one grave fault...he is too friendly with persons of the opposite sex."⁸⁵ Though no reason for the sudden withdrawal of Father Molony was disclosed, the zealous, though perhaps imprudent Basilian commented on arrival in France: "I felt the need of retreat to renew me in the ecclesiastical spirit and to fulfil my holy vocation."⁸⁶

The good qualities of the first Basilian Fathers resident in Canada have been grasped in previous chapters. The aim of this phase of the study is purposely a purely objective consideration of their shortcomings to illustrate the magnitude of the disciplinary problem which daily faced Father Soulerin. In the cases of Fathers Molony and Flannery, the superior was confronted with two men zealous in the performance of their academic and parochial duties but somewhat lax in the observance of their rule. Though they exhibited no ill-will, their shortcomings were

⁸⁴Ibid., July 15, 1857, p.1.

⁸⁵Ibid., July 11, 1857, p.2.

⁸⁶Rev. P. Molony, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, August 4, 1857, p.1.

sufficient to constitute a problem of no small moment for the superior. The defects of these two men paled into insignificance when compared with the bursar, Father Malbos, of whom the superior claimed "contributed most, through his natural independent and violent spirit, to weaken the bonds of union and charity."⁸⁷ Aware of the historian's need of objectivity, it is impossible to read the correspondence of Father Malbos without depicting him as the epitome of vanity, fabrication and unco-operativeness. His attempts to undermine the hard working Toronto superior stand out as clearly as his rule violations.

The unco-operativeness of the bursar was evident from the origin of Basilian occupation in Toronto and from the mass of evidence we need select only a few illustrations. When duty called Father Soulerin to check the accounts of the bursar it was always a very disagreeable task not only because of the tenseness accompanying the procedure but because the information was always "vague and faulty and this required tact and patience."⁸⁸ Internal peace which was so necessary to the success of the Basilian foundation could only be secured as Father Soulerin expressed it "when I close my eyes to his actions or

⁸⁷ Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, July 11, 1857, p.2.

⁸⁸ Ibid., July 5, 1855, p.1.

when I speak with all reserve to him."⁸⁹ Thoroughly aware of the fragile position of the Superior with no hope for French Basilians, and no adequate bursar replacement, Father Malbos was able to flaunt the authority of the superior. When the selection of a pastor for the newly erected St. Basil's church was broached, it seemed imperative to both General and superior that the position of pastor and superior be combined in the same person. As customary, Father Malbos disagreed holding that "if the superior is the pastor, it will stifle liberty of action and harm the people."⁹⁰ Fortunately this protest was ignored and future events have proven the wisdom of the superior. Then, too, when the Clover Hill project was in the stage of consideration, Father Soulerin indicated his preference for the erection of a church and not necessarily a house. To this Father Malbos expressed himself: "I am of a mind to build a college...but the plans are in the hands of the great architect of the Community, Father Soulerin."⁹¹ When the superior decided that the plan to build a college in connection with the church was wise and indicated his willingness to accede to it, the opposition of the bursar became manifest even though it

⁸⁹Ibid., April 6, 1856, p.2.

⁹⁰Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, 1854, p.2.

⁹¹Ibid., September 20, 1853, p.2.

required a rejection of his previous stand. He did not hesitate to claim that: "any desire of the superior's to leave the Palace is an act of blindness."⁹² That Father Malbos was aware of this lack of co-operation was indicated by his own admission: "my letter seems to contradict a preceding one."⁹³ An awareness of the general dislike by the Fathers to his attitude led the bursar to complain: "certain ones attribute my conduct to a certain phlegm which they believe I possess."⁹⁴ It was certainly a laudatory interpretation of his actions by his confrères, who omitted references to the conduct of Father Malbos in their letters because it was primarily a matter for the superior. On occasion, however, some defect accidentally was mentioned as when Father Flannery succinctly states that at the St. Patrick's Day ceremony in 1853: "Father Malbos kept quiet for, perhaps, the first time since he came to Toronto."⁹⁵

In conjunction with this spirit of contrariness and contradiction, Father Malbos exhibited a vanity that reached the realm of ridiculousness and a desire for authority that for him, sanctioned the use of any and all

⁹²Ibid., September 20, 1853, p.2.

⁹³Ibid., February 13, 1854, p. 1.

⁹⁴Ibid., April 27, 1853, p.2.

⁹⁵Rev. P. Flannery, Letter to a Confrère, Holy Week, 1853, p.2.

means. Writing to Father Deglesne, the Toronto bursar mentioned that "some malicious persons have said 'without me the Community would not run'."⁹⁶ In attributing such sound financial and economical acumen to himself it seems rather odd to find the bursar willing to resign his post and proposing to the General to "combine my office to the superiorate."⁹⁷ It can be interpreted either that his work was so negligible that the Superior could add it to his already burdensome duties or, that such was the ability of the superior that the addition of the economical aspects of the foundation was quite within his powers. The proposed combination also seems to refute the bursar's boast that he did the work of four men.⁹⁸ His role in the conviviality of the house was for Father Malbos, one of utmost importance for he felt called on: "frequently to pacify my confrères, encourage them and cheer them up with my humour."⁹⁹ Of course, this was an indirect reference at the inability of the superior to maintain a successful 'status quo'. Completely beyond the econome's duty was his willingness to inform the General on the character of the Fathers: "this one is over-bitter, too acrimonious, never

⁹⁶ Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. Deglesne, Holy Saturday 1856, p.2.

⁹⁷ Ibid., March 12, 1853, p.3.

⁹⁸ Ibid., October 19, 1856, p.1.

⁹⁹ Ibid., March 12, 1853, p.2.

wrong: This one is stubborn and pouts."¹⁰⁰ It is sad to realize the pride of the bursar who, on being handed an unpaid bill of Father Soulerin, complained to the General that his position "was relegated to that of a mere cashier."¹⁰¹ It is also sad to realize his childish complaining over the fact "that Father Soulerin doesn't very often manifest that I perform the duties of my office well."¹⁰² Constantly opposed to the Concordat plans, the bursar claimed: "I know I have enough virtue to rejoice if the concordat is such that it procures advantages for us."¹⁰³

Though only a small proportion of mankind is free from sentiments of vanity, it is not unjust to point out the bursar's failings in that respect because such was his excess that a problem for the Community was constituted. That he aimed at the superior's position was evident even to the patient superior who, realizing the need for peace, was quite willing to serve under Father Malbos. Such a proposal found little favour with the bishop who rejected the suggestion completely.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p.1.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Ibid., October 19, 1856, p.2.

¹⁰³Ibid., March 25, 1855, p.2.

¹⁰⁴Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, April 6, 1856, p.2. This letter refers to Bishop Charbonnel's refusal to accept the proposal.

While Father Malbos' excessive vanity can be pitied, if not condoned, the undermining and the underhand methods he used to discredit the superior cannot be overlooked. A less virile man than Father Soulerin might have capitulated in the face of the daily barrage with the probable result of Basilian extinction in Canada, a conclusion substantiated by a reflection on Father Malbos' dismal failure at Assumption College. As it was, the Superior experienced some moments of frustration: "alas, how many criticisms I have heard during the last three years and how often I was tempted to express my own complaints."¹⁰⁵ But the Superiors' frustration was only momentary because of his deep spiritual life and, at the prospect of the bursar's departure for Sandwich, he uttered a paean for he had "accepted the character and conduct of my confrère for five years with patience."¹⁰⁶

During the Concordat arrangements Father Malbos claimed that he was ignored in the proceedings.¹⁰⁷ With the request that the General should not reveal any reference to Father Soulerin of the bursar's correspondence, Father Malbos wrote: "the Concordat has been hidden from me....now Father Soulerin has opened his eyes to reality....I

¹⁰⁵Ibid., November 14, 1855, p.2.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., July 11, 1857, p.2.

¹⁰⁷Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, March 25, 1855, p.2.

am sure he will veil reality from you.....he doesn't know business well."¹⁰⁸ Yet when this ignorance conflicted with his vain attempts to indicate his importance to the Community, Father Malbos did not hesitate to claim that: "Father Soulerin kept me last evening till 10:30 p.m. to read and discuss the Concordat."¹⁰⁹ That the superior was not in the habit of concealing relevant information from the bursar is proven from Father Malbos' own vain reflectives: "The Superior often brings me his confidenceshe asks my help more than my confrères."¹¹⁰ Moreover, any feeling that Father Soulerin was ignorant of monetary affairs is dispelled by a consideration of his desire to have salary increases, or of his efforts to secure the government grants and his haggling with the bishop over the tuition fees of ecclesiastical students.

In an effort to have the government grant transferred to the community, Father Soulerin proposed the logical step of having the government inspect the manner in which the money was expended. This was expected to oblige the bishop to relinquish a great part of the grant for College purposes, and was certainly the action of a

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p.3.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 1854, p.2.

¹¹⁰Ibid., April 27, 1853, p.3.

man acquainted with business affairs. Father Malbos continued in his secret letter: "Father Soulerin told me with complacency of his proposal to Parliament.....it isn't a very Christian procedure to attack a signed concordat."¹¹¹ The conclusion of Father Malbos' remarks is difficult to grasp. He accuses the superior in the same letter of hiding the Concordat from him, yet admits that the superior's proposal to Parliament attacks the terms of the agreement. In addition, the bursar levelled the charge of ignorance in business on the superior and yet, in his closing remarks, attacked what he felt was his economic Machiavellianism.

Perhaps, a religious, exemplary in every respect, would be justified in attacking the religious conduct of his superior. Should the religious be guilty of a multitude of rule infractions, his criticism would be received with a certain amount of misgiving. It is in this latter fashion that the attacks of Father Malbos on the religious decorum of his superior must be considered. Guilty of many rule violations, the bursar was frequently the recipient of disciplinary letters from his General. One such occasion was the result of two newspaper articles penned by Father Malbos without permission of his superior. In reply to this correction, the bursar replied: "I

¹¹¹ Ibid., March 25, 1855, p.3.

acknowledge the advice you gave me.....I agreed on the insistence of the newspapermen who begged me."¹¹² It is beyond an analytical work to fathom the reason why English-speaking newspapermen would solicit the aid of a French-speaking priest, resident in Canada for only seven months, to write a newspaper article in English. It is not beyond the scope of the work to interpret that, despite the General's corrective, Father Malbos still felt justified in his action.

As to his religious conduct, the superior wrote in 1857:

Father Malbos goes out day and night.....I don't know when he leaves or returns or where he goes....I don't believe I have seen him at particular examen three times.....one word infuriates him....it is above all for the exterior that my confrère wishes to be superior, but he is far from being zealous in the interior.¹¹³

Moreover, "he makes gifts, either money or other things, to the wife of the organist without permission."¹¹⁴ In addition, Father Soulerin reeled from being called "imbecile on an occasion which is unfortunately not an isolated one, showing that the econome is absolutely independent of the superior."¹¹⁵ Such was the character of the man who attacked Father Soulerin, claiming "he is lax, forgetful,

¹¹²Ibid., April 27, 1853, p.2.

¹¹³cf. Appendix 8, p. 243

¹¹⁴cf. Appendix 8, p. 244

¹¹⁵Rev. J. Soulerin, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, June 9, 1857. p.2.

not capable of forming ecclesiastics as he does not insist on particular examen for them."¹¹⁶ Such, too, was the man who claimed that "there is a repugnance among our young confrères to enter our community."¹¹⁷ It is difficult to miss the connection between the two letters so close together were they written--that Father Soulerin was not a capable superior for the Basilian foundation. Though there is no intent to connect the advent of vocations with the withdrawal of Father Malbos from St. Michael's, such was the historical fact.

It was very unfortunate for the Basilian Community, if we merely consider temporalities, to be saddled with problems of such magnitude in the external and internal order in the first few years of its Canadian residence. That the brunt of the worry coincident with these problems fell squarely on the strong shoulders of Father Soulerin was similarly unfortunate for him, but of immense good fortune for the future history of the Basilian Community. Few men could cope with such a variety of problems and attain such unparalleled success. He was an exemplary religious and superior, with the administrative ability of a successful business man, the fatherly solicitude of a parent and the courage of a pioneer. Perhaps only a few of his

¹¹⁶Rev. J. Malbos, Letter to Rev. P. Tourvieille, June 9, 1857, p.2.

¹¹⁷Ibid., March 25, 1855, p.2.

contemporaries realized the enormity of his burdens and the efforts he expended in removing them. That his General did realize, however, is indicated by his spiritual advice to Father Soulerin: "you must water Canada, I do not say with your blood.....it consists in dying daily to self in the performance of duties which have no lustre in the eyes of men."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Rev. P. Tourvieille, Letter to Rev. J. Soulerin, 1856, p.1.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study the problems facing the Basilian Fathers during their first ten year residence in Canada have been indicated and analyzed. During this trying period, the perseverance, prudence and zeal of Father Soulerin is especially worthy of praise and he, more than any other, is responsible for the measure of success that is, to-day, credited to the Basilian Congregation.

The problems that faced the Community in Toronto, in 1850, were both numerous and vexing. The initial difficulties of language and custom differences were solved through diligence and perseverance and by the fostering of native vocations. Climatic vagaries were accepted with religious indifference while the financial embarrassment was prudently removed by an increased salary - the result of a painstaking and detailed comparison of Canadian and French prices.

The danger to Basilian vocations, the result of a too great eagerness to participate in the more independent life of the missionary, was largely avoided through the emphasis placed on the taking of vows prior to ordination and the reiterated demands for solidly spiritual subjects.

The decision to build the new St. Michael's on the donated rather than the purchased property together with the intricate and exhaustive methods adopted, by the

Basilians, to secure financial help required much thought and effort. The financial clauses of the Concordat resulted from a similar expenditure of time and effort.

The solution of these problems resulted in the erection of a strong foundation in Toronto. In addition a blue print was provided for future Basilian foundations. Each new establishment carried with it problems of a similar nature but the experience obtained in the 1850-1860 period reduced these difficulties enormously. The Concordat with Bishop Pinsonnault over Assumption College was concluded in a matter of days, while the curriculum required only slight modifications based, as it was, on that of St. Michael's. As the Community spread, language and custom barriers dissolved and the difficulties of construction, so formidable at Toronto, were greatly diminished.

This study is merely an analysis of the formative years of the Community in Toronto and adjacent regions. The way is opened for a further examination of Basilian activities in the period after 1860. This latter period is indeed a fertile one as the work of the first Basilians resulted in the extension of activities to include not only colleges, high-schools and parishes in Canada and the United States but also mission endeavours among the Mexicans and

the establishment of a centre, with Pontifical approbation, to disseminate the wisdom of the Middle Ages and the teachings of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas.

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APPENDIX 1

Projected Concordat of Rev. P. Tourvieille, 1854¹

I, Armand de Charbonnel, Bishop of Toronto:

Considering that the first and the greatest good that I can do for the glory of God in this vast diocese that the Church has confided to me, consists above all in giving a good Catholic education to the students aspiring to the priesthood:

Considering that Divine Providence has appeared to manifest His views in inspiring me to call a colony of priests of the Congregation of St. Basil who, for two years have performed this work with a success surpassing my hopes:

Considering that it is my duty to consolidate the establishment of this community in Toronto: Considering that it cannot develop in a suitable and stable manner in the Episcopal Palace, and that my successors might not agree that a large part of the palace be set aside for a college:

Considering that the religious services in the cathedral require the presence of several choristers:

Considering finally that a bishop of Upper Canada will be too absorbed in episcopal functions to have care of

¹Basilian Archives, Toronto.

constructions or other duties if the college were placed elsewhere than in the Episcopal Palace. So, after conferring with the Superior General of the Congregation of St. Basil we have agreed on what follows:

In my name and in those of my successors I grant the priests of the Congregation of St. Basil, the right to educate the aspirants to the priesthood of my diocese, as well as those other students whose parents will choose the said congregation for secular education. And I, Pierre Tourvieille, honorary canon of Viviers, of Bordeaux and Mende, Superior General of the said Congregation, in my name and that of my legitimate successors accept the direction of the establishment on the following conditions:

Article 1

The Community of St. Basil accepts the perils and risks coincident with a foundation in Toronto.

Article 2

All the construction expenses for buildings, whatever their purpose, their upkeep as well as the salary of the professors and other employees in the houses of the Congregation, remain the charge of the Community of St. Basil: there will be no claim on the Ordinary except the fee for the boarding of the aspirants to the Ecclesiastical state and the 1/10th tithe.

Article 3

Monseigneur consents to pay the board (not including his books) of each student aspiring to the priesthood. Fees for the board of non-aspiring students will be fixed by the superior, as well as the amount to be paid by the day scholars.

Article 4

All the funds destined for the aspirants, whatever the source, will be in the charge of the economer of the Community and an account will be made to Monseigneur at the end of each year.

Article 5

Monseigneur ought to have a choir school in the Episcopal Palace for all the choir children destined for the religious service of the Cathedral.

Article 6

When the church is constructed, the curé, appointed by the Superior, will receive his powers from the bishop, but the said curé and the other priests administering the Church will remain as the other professors, under the immediate jurisdiction of the Superior of the Community.

Article 7

The bishop consents only to employ in the Sacred Ministry in the Episcopal city or in the missions, members of the Community who will be designated by the Superior.

Article 8

The Superior will determine the number of professors

and other necessary employees in each house. He can keep the aspirants whom he believes necessary for work in the establishment. If they have ended their classic studies, they are authorized to make their theology course during their professoriate, and the bishop, after being assured of their virtue and capacity, will admit them to Orders, on the advice of the Superior. In order that the aspirants who have made their clerical studies have a certain maturity of age which will guarantee them from the dangers of the Holy Ministry, they will pass six years in the professoriate, after their elevation to the priesthood.

Article 9

Monseigneur consents to the aspirants who have made their theology, either in the houses of the Congregation, or Montreal, or elsewhere and who wish to join the Congregation, to have full liberty to do so.

APPENDIX 2

Projected Concordat of Bishop Charbonnel, 1854¹.

I, Armand de Charbonnel, Bishop of Toronto:

Considering that the first and the greatest good that I can do for the glory of God in this vast diocese that the Church has confided to me, consists above all in giving good Catholic education to the students aspiring to the priesthood:

Considering that Divine Providence has appeared to manifest His views in inspiring me to call a colony of priests of the Congregation of St. Basil who, for two years have commenced this work with a success which surpassed my hopes. So, after conferring with the Superior General of the Congregation of St. Basil we have agreed on what follows:

In my name and in those of my successors I grant to the priests of the Congregation of St. Basil, the right to educate the aspirants to the priesthood of my diocese, as well as those other students whose parents will choose the said congregation for secular education.

¹Basilian Archives, Toronto.

And I, Pierre Tourvieille, honorary canon of Viviers, of Bordeaux and Mende, Superior General of the said Congregation, in my name and that of my legitimate successors, accept the direction of the establishment on the following conditions:

Article 1

The Community of St. Basil accepts the perils and risks coincident with a foundation in Toronto.

Article 2

All the construction expenses for buildings, whatever their purpose, their upkeep as well as the salary of the professors and other employees in the houses of the Congregation remain the charge of the Community of St. Basil: there will be no claim on the Ordinary except (1) the fee suitable for the boarding of the aspirants to the Ecclesiastical State in the following article and (2) the one-tenth of the revenues of the Church, if Monseigneur agrees.

Article 3

The bishop consents that all the funds, whatever their source and all grants made by the government for the College of St. Michael, will be placed in the accounts of the econome; the latter will be held to account at the end of each trimester to Monseigneur, who pledges himself to leave two-thirds of these funds in the hands of the econome, to pay for all aspirants over fourteen years of age. He will pay for each, so long as the need exists,

at a rate of five louis, per annum. This amount will include books, paper, pen and ink. The fee of the non-aspirants will be fixed by the superior as well as the tuition of the externs.

Article 4

When the church is constructed the curé appointed by the Superior will receive his powers from the bishop, but the said curé and the other priests administering the church will remain as the other professors, under the immediate jurisdiction of the Superior of the Community.

Article 5

If the bishop doesn't use the students from the Brothers' primary school, for his cathedral choir, the community must send ten or twelve students to the Cathedral, on Sundays and holy-days. Immediately afterward these students will be taken back to the College by the prefect of discipline.

Article 6

The bishop consents only to employ in the Sacred Ministry in the Episcopal city or in the missions, members of the Community who will be designated by the Superior.

Article 7

The superior will determine the number of professors and other necessary employees: he can keep the aspirants whom he believes necessary for work in the establishment. These last can make their theology course while teaching

and be admitted to Holy Orders on the advice of the Superior and two other priests of the Community selected by the bishop. They are to pass six years in teaching after their promotion to the priesthood.

Article 8

Monseigneur consents to the aspirants who have made their theology, either in the houses of the Congregation, or Montreal, or elsewhere and who wish to join the Congregation, to have full liberty to do so.

APPENDIX 3

Official Episcopal Community Concordat, 1855.¹

I, Armand Francois-Marie de Charbonnel, Bishop of Toronto:

Considering that the first and greatest good which I can do in the diocese confided to me consists in giving a good Catholic education to young men, both to aspirants to the liberal professions and to the Ecclesiastical state:

Considering that Divine Providence has appeared to manifest its designs in giving me the favour of a group of priests from the Congregation of St. Basil, to whose founders I owe my education and vocation in the Ecclesiastical State, and who for two years have successfully established a Little Seminary in Toronto:

Considering that it is of the greatest interest for me and my successors to consolidate this establishment and to develop it in a suitable and stable manner:

Considering, on the other hand, that the religious needs of the Cathedral demand the presence of several students at certain liturgical times: So,

After conferring with the Superior General of the Congregation of St. Basil, last survivor of the venerable

¹Basilian Archives, Toronto.

founders of the College at Annonay, my Alma Mater, which holds for me many sweet memories, we are agreed to the following: I grant, in my name and that of my successors, to the priests of the said Congregation of St. Basil, the education of the aspirants to the Ecclesiastical state of the Toronto diocese as well as those other students found worthy of being admitted and whom we hope will profit from the same good atmosphere. However, these last must be separated from the former whenever the circumstances permit it.

And I, Pierre Tourvieille, superior-general of the Congregation of St. Basil, in my name and those of my legitimate successors, accept the direction of the establishment on the following conditions:

1. The establishment at Toronto, with its risks and perils, remains the responsibility of the Congregation of St. Basil.

2. All the expenses including the construction of the buildings, their upkeep, and the salaries of the professors and employees are assumed by the said Community. There will be no recourse to the bishop, apart from that which is contained in the following article.

3. The bishop agrees to pay twenty-five louis board for every aspirant over fourteen years of age. This will include all expenses such as books, paper, etc. The bishop promises an annual assistance of 250 louis, so long

as the establishment does not have an excess of fifty boarders--aid will be diminished by ten louis for each student above fifty. The bishop agrees to give up half of the collections in favour of the Community so long as there is need.

4. Each Sunday and Holy Day the Seminary will send to the Cathedral students necessary for Divine service.

5. According to the terms of the Council of Trent, the bishop will visit the establishment to examine its temporal and spiritual well-being.

6. The curé of the Church to be constructed will receive his powers from the bishop. The said priest, as well as the other priests employed in parish work, although submitting to all the rules of the Church and diocese, will remain, as the other teachers, under the immediate jurisdiction of the Superior of the Community for all that is done in the Church. The bishop will have the right to one-tenth of all the revenues of the said Church.

7. The bishop consents to employ in the diocese, only the members of the Community designated by the Superior.

8. The bishop should be willing as far as possible to loan the aspirants whom the superior needs for teaching. These aspirants should make their theology while teaching and be admitted to Holy Orders on the authorization of the Superior and of two other priests of the Community, chosen

by the bishop: they will pass, at least, three years in teaching after their promotion to Orders.

9. Not only will the bishop promise perfect liberty to those who will indicate a vocation for the Congregation of St. Basil but he will look at these vocations as one of the greatest blessings accorded to the diocese.

Note: The bishop, having the right after the present Concordat to one-tenth of the revenues of the Church, as well as one-half of the collections and the government grant, will receive an account book with credits and debits indicated, in which there will be written very conscientiously, article by article, the product of the Church revenues, of the special collections and the government grant. This register will be presented to the bishop, at his request. Credits and debits will be fixed for the 1st January of each year, or every six months at the will of the bishop. It will be deposited in his hands by the econome, and the register will be signed by both.

Armand Francois Marie,
Bishop of Toronto

Tourvieille, priest,
Superior-General of the
Fathers of St. Basil.

APPENDIX 4

Later Concordat Revision of Bishop Charbonnel, 1855.¹

Venerable Superior:

You recall that the first expenses made for St. Michael's College, voyages, location, new buildings have come to more than 38,000 francs and the various gifts I have made for several undertakings came to more than 30,000 francs. I have pledged with you in writing (i) to pay 500 francs per student in my charge, (ii) to give 5000 francs yearly so long as St. Michael's would not have more than fifty boarders. To these contributions I have promised to give (i) the half of the collections, (ii) the half of the government grant and (iii) the revenues of St. Basil's Church. This amount was given to the economer, Father Malbos, in front of all his confrères. The College did not expect such a generous gift--I, even less, expected to learn several months later that the College of Sandwich, several hours distance by railway, would be formed against my will from the priests of St. Michael's in the third year of its existence.

In consequence I decided to suppress the annual gift of 5000 francs. This is what I have to tell you in a very formal manner. St. Michael's, this year, received

¹Basilian Archives, Toronto.

from me over 5000 francs as a gift. I gave more--2848 francs for students' board: 3000 francs from collections: 5000 francs from grants and 6000 from church revenues: in all 21,848 francs--from which you see that in keeping 5000 francs, St. Michael's will still prosper marvellously and I will be a little less embarrassed in continuing diocesan works and starting new ones. I will give no consideration to the objections of any of the good fathers and it would be best to let me believe that you are quite satisfied with the reduction.

APPENDIX 5

Plan of St. Basil's Church and St. Michael's College.¹

This edifice, of a style new, as yet, in this country, but well known and appreciated in England, France, and Germany, is situated in one of the most delightful localities in the vicinity of the city. It is sufficiently removed from the city to be free from its turmoil and bustle, and yet near enough to enjoy the advantages of its vicinity. The new establishment, raised 125 feet above the level of the lake, over which the sight extends, commands a beautiful prospect, and besides, surrounded by groves of cooling and delightful shade, seems to unite the most favourable advantages of a college--a pure atmosphere, the calmness of solitude, the charms of the country, the convenience of the city.

The plan is the work of a very able architect, Mr. Wm. Hay, well skilled in the knowledge of his art, whose conceptions, full of taste and simplicity, have acquired for him a high reputation in England and Scotland. St. Michael's College, when circumstances will permit its completion, is calculated to accommodate 200 pupils. The principal wing, which is now about to be built, is ninety feet in length and forty in breadth, and the height is

¹Catholic Citizen, August 16, 1855, Vol.3, p.2, col.2.

forty-eight feet: at the west of which is a church in process, whose dimensions are one hundred feet in length, by fifty in breadth, affording a chapel for the convenience of the pupils and also a new facility for the Catholics of the environs to assist at Divine Service on Sunday and Festivals.

The buildings are arranged in the form of a quadrangle, after the manner of the ancient English colleges. The church occupies one side of the square and consists of nave and aisles, with extended chancel and side chapels.

The style of the Sacred edifice is severe first pointed, or that which prevailed in England about the middle of the thirteenth century. The roof, of open timber construction with bold design, will form an imposing feature in the internal aspect of the church. The tower, situated at a corner of the nave and crowned by a light graceful spire, opens, at its base, a communication between the church and the low cloister. This cloister forms part of a continuous ambulatory around the entire quadrangle.

The Collegiate buildings are grouped together on the remaining sides of the square with regard to convenience and propriety of arrangement. They consist chiefly of classrooms, refectory, dormitories and private rooms for the Superior and staff, with domestic buildings for the servants of the institution.

The irregular boundary lines of the grounds have

afforded the Architect an opportunity of giving a very pleasing and picturesque constructive effect to the grouping of the more open part of the quadrangle.

APPENDIX 6

Early History of Regiopolis College 1839-1869¹

The history of Regiopolis College is parallel to that of the Diocese of Kingston. It owes its existence to the efforts of the scholarly pioneer Bishop of Kingston, the Right Rev. Alexander MacDonnell, D.D. Even before Upper Canada had been constituted a Diocese, Bishop MacDonnell had been interested in seeing an institution of higher learning established for English-speaking Canadians, and a Seminary to provide priests for the immense mission field which he saw before him. Accordingly, he had already founded such an institution, Iona Academy, in conjunction with his Church at St. Raphael's, near Kingston.

As soon as the Diocese was formed in 1826, and Bishop MacDonnell installed in Kingston, he formed visions of a Catholic University here. He decided to transfer the College from Iona to Kingston. On March 4, 1837, King William IV granted a charter of incorporation as a University to the College of Regiopolis to be erected at Kingston. In a few months the Rebellion broke out, and delayed the plans; the Bishop stood on the side of lawful authority in the country. As soon as the trouble died down, he proceeded; it was to be an imposing structure for those days, built of

¹Canadian Register of Toronto, April 29, 1944, p.2., col.4.

cut stone. The building was located on Sydenham Street, and is now part of the Hotel Dieu Hospital. On June 11, 1839, he laid the cornerstone of the new structure, assisted by his Coadjutor, Bishop Gaulin. It was his last official act; in a few days he left for Scotland to collect funds for the college, and died there the following January.

Records for the next fifty years are scanty. Under Bishop Gaulin, Regiopolis opened its doors, with the Reverend Angus MacDonnell, V.G., a nephew of the former Bishop, as the first Rector. Bishop Phelan, Coadjutor to Bishop Gaulin, on whom the responsibility of the Diocese rested after 1843, realized the difficulty of providing a staff for the College from the Diocese, and made several requests to the Jesuit Fathers for them to take it over. In 1849 they agreed to do so, and sent one priest, Father Tellier, to act as Prefect of Discipline, Dean, and Professor of Theology. But after one year the Society of Jesus saw that the needs of their Order would not allow them to continue in Regiopolis, and Father Tellier was recalled.

Under Bishop Horan, Regiopolis attained brilliant scholastic glories. It functioned as a High School, College, and Seminary. In 1866 an Act of Parliament gave the school a University charter, with full power to grant degrees. Students came from all parts of English-speaking Canada, and the States of New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Jersey and Michigan. A newspaper report of a Graduation in those

days tells of the high order of the courses in Classics, Belles Lettres, etc. Distinguished among the graduates of this period were two men who were later to become Rectors of the College and Ordinaries of Kingston; the Right Rev. John O'Brien, and the Most Rev. Charles Hugh Gauthier. Financial reasons forced Regiopolis to close its doors in 1869.

APPENDIX 7

Extract of the Circular of St. Basil.¹

(Tourvieille to Monseigneur Charbonnel)

Annonay, 13, October, 1856.

Monseigneur:

I am anxious to know about your health. I hope that you will escape any recurrence of your previous sickness.

I read with great pleasure of your decision on the subject of the House of Providence which you wish to establish at Toronto. Your pastoral is clear and precise and cannot help impressing the faithful, and, as well, the humanitarians and supporters of community charity. Your decision to retire to this refuge is laudatory.

I received a letter from M. Soulerin. The small community has commenced its new construction. The Divine Office has been celebrated in the Church, on the feast of the Holy Cross, with a great crowd. M. Soulerin hopes that the year beginning on the 7th will be happy and he assures me that all his confrères work with good will. I replied to him in a long letter and repeated several essential points:

¹Basilian Archives, Toronto.

1. On going out: it is forbidden to go out in the city except for duty imposed by God and not for things which the imagination or whims can suggest. Never, except through necessity in helping the sick, can one be out of the house after 7 p.m. in the winter: and in the summer one must return a little later, at least by nightfall. Never can one leave the house without the Superior's knowledge, as it is his business. The Superior and econome are not dispensed from reporting their visits. No one is permitted, without having informed the Superior, to absent himself from common religious exercises.
2. It is forbidden to have get to-gether's daily for drinking and eating.
3. One must never hear a woman's confession other than in a confessional placed in a public place.
4. A woman must never enter in the cells. When mothers have to speak to the superior or econome, the door of the room must be half open. There ought to be a parlour in the house to receive visitors. For visits demanded through necessity or through charity, one must avoid, as much as possible, being 'solus cum sola' according to the recommendations.

5. Authority is una and can't be divided without destruction. It is one, in the general, who rules all the houses and members. It is still one in each house and represented by the local superior. It is on him that all responsibility remains, both moral and temporal. He is assisted by a council which will assist him by its ideas, without nevertheless binding him to conform to the opinion of the majority. Finally, both the religious and domestics resident in the establishment are subject to the Superior. Not only must he command, but he must assure himself that everything he prescribes is executed. There is particularly the econome--he is not obliged to take orders from his superior for ordinary provisions, but he must on large matters. He can also repair damage without consulting the Superior but he cannot hire servants or workers without advising the Superior and having his assent. What we have said of the econome applies also to the prefect of studies. The latter cannot admit, nor expel a student--their place in the study halls, or elsewhere, corrections or punishments must all be approved by the Superior. When the Superior General has not

assigned the work that each individual must do, it becomes the responsibility of the local superior. No member of the Community can object to, or be obstinate in the work confided to him. It is up to the wisdom and discernment of the Superior, to employ his staff according to the needs of the establishment.

6. Our confrères must appear in public in clerical attire, modestly worn. They must be clothed with the holy habit which the Church has given them and which recalls to them, ceaselessly, what they are doing. They must always wear the cassock, reminding them of what their Divine Master wore, and aiding them to accept with resignation all humiliations and trials. They will never forget that a secular and affected garb has the appearance of worldiness, keeping the priest from his state, wounding religious consciences, causing men without faith to smile with pity, and admirably providing the enemies of religion with calumnies to use in their attacks. You understand, Monseigneur, that this is only a resumé of the circular which I addressed to our confrères. I have not hesitated, more or less at length in some cases, to motivate

each of them. So your Excellency, you receive all the essential points I forwarded to our dear confrères with strict obligation to follow them.

I wrote in particular to M. Malbos the following lines:

I have just written a letter, in circular form, to your superior, to the terms of which you must scrupulously conform. I have no doubt (as the members of my council share my sentiment) that the work so happily begun by you can only increase and prosper so long as you make a serious promise in conscience to observe in the interest of your community, as before, the articles which I call to your attention. You have had and will have, either outside or inside, difficulties to surmount and, I add, dangers to flee: you will triumph over some and avoid others through the grace of God. Ah! If you have the faith of Abraham and his obedience, you will share his blessings and graces. See the throne reserved to you and the crown awaiting you! But the Saviour only saved the world (reflect on it) in opposing the pride which filled it, with a humility; and sensualism, with mortification of the flesh and the cross. I authorize you to reflect with all your confrères.

I asked M. Malbos to send me, actively and passively, the state of present finances. I furnished him with an added account book which must be signed by his superior and himself. To verify the accounts, the two signatures are necessary.

There you have a reply, Monseigneur, to the request of M. Soulerin; it was accompanied by another from M. Vincent for me, and one on the 7th for his mother. In the latter, M. Vincent shows, as in the preceding ones, excellent dispositions and, although nature cried out, he

generously accepted the information about his sick father, who has just been anointed.

In the present circumstances, I will destroy the small colony in keeping M. Malbos there. If M. Vincent, through impulse of his heart, leaves Canada, what will M. Soulerin do? I believe I am acting with as much wisdom as possible, as I write you, Monseigneur. M. Soulerin will find the strength to do the work with zeal and I hope he has a good year.

That is the picture of the situation. Ah! Monseigneur, how I wished I could fulfil your wishes! We were weakened by the loss of five of our staff members. The hand of God has taken two others who were as my head and arms. I have confidence in Divine Providence which knows our great need for subjects. Please pray for us. Regards, Your Excellency.

Humbly,

P. Tourvieille.

APPENDIX 8

Letter of Rev. J. Soulerin on House Discipline.¹

July, 1857.

Venerable Superior and Father:

We have just received your last letter to the great joy of M. Vincent, and to us also, because it contains interesting details. M. Vincent intends leaving on the 16th July, the day after our graduation, along with M. Flannery who is going to tour Ireland, although I have done my best to prevent him. I would refuse him all authorization but this would be only another reason for his permanent departure.

His parishioners, on learning of his trip, furnished him with financial means and he will have nothing to ask of us. I wouldn't accord it without your authorization because it would establish a bad precedent. This time I am ready to write news and I want you to understand my position here, although M. Vincent will also inform you of the situation.

M. Vincent is, of all the confreres, the one who has the best spirit; minds his own business; is pleasant with the boys and pious. M. Flannery is a good child, but he is too inclined to be restless, too light and not

¹Basilian Archives, Toronto.

assiduous in his religious exercises. M. Molony is the devout man and the worker in the house but alas! I fear a great deal that his piety, if not his faith, grows weak. I fear that he has another grave fault: he has been too friendly with persons of the opposite sex: and if he has some vicious inclinations, his functions of curé will always give him, occasions in spite of vigilance.

As for M. Malbos, I do not hesitate to say it, and I believe that it is my duty, that he has contributed most, without deliberate intent but, I think, through his natural independent and violent spirit, to weaken the bonds of union and charity. It is useless to hide it from you: warnings have no effect. He continues to go out a little more each day and sometimes twice daily and remains out a part of the night. I don't know when he leaves or returns or where he goes but I know that he does not go to the purveyors, as he believes it beneath him. I don't believe I have seen him three times at particular examen, although he is generally in the house at that time. He is more regular at meditation and reading although he is absent often enough. The letter which I have addressed to you and which I send today will give you some indication of the position this man takes. I am refused the right of commanding anything without his approval: he doesn't put himself under any restraint. I admit that I am not abreast

of our business affairs and that I dread to ask him about it for fear of a scandalous outburst. One word infuriates him and when that happens all the walls rebound and everyone goes to his room. He has no respect for anyone. I have been informed that he makes gifts of both money and other things. Specifically, he gave one hundred francs to the wife of our organist, for what I do not know, as she is paid four hundred francs per year and also receives eighty francs from each pupil for music lessons. He often speaks of continuing the building and I am told that he borrows a great deal. I resolved, for the first time, when the students went home, to check the account books. But I can tell you that my authority is a little less than nothing with this confrère. I have seen the poor M. Polly refuse a reduction of six francs to a father of a family before speaking to you. I have seen the Superior give a direction to the econome who received it, and made it a point of conscience for disposing of a sum even less without his approval. So the roles have changed. M. Vincent knows the situation as well as I, and can inform you if you ask him. The worst of the affair is that I have little hope of changing this confrère and of putting a man in his place. He doesn't pay attention to your circulars and challenges the bishop to interfere or replace him.

Apart from the constructions that we have made, with your permission, I do not believe I have authorized an expense of twenty-five francs during the year. I have paid from my own purse for the shutters of my room, although they were necessary; no one makes useless expenditures. It is above all in the eyes of the world that my confrère wants to be superior, but in the interior and for what pertains to the property of the house, he is far from being so zealous. It is difficult to be more negligent. While we were in the palace Monseigneur corrected him because he noticed that he always seemed to ignore my remarks. I accepted the character and conduct of my confrère for five years with patience and I am disposed to continue, but it is going too far. It is a disorder which has inconveniences and dangers. After you talk with M. Vincent, please write to the econome and myself, clarifying the following questions:

1. Is it the superior or econome who has the right to give permission on necessary expenditures?
2. Can the superior act against the opinion of the econome?
3. What sum can be spent without having recourse to the Superior General?
4. Can the econome, determine the rules on which a student be admitted and make reductions or gifts, other than little New Year's gifts, without consulting the superior?

5. Can he borrow or invest considerable sums without speaking to the superior?

6. Can the econome, on the pretext that he is authorized in general to go out for business reasons, be dispensed from that article of the rule governing visits, and can he, when it seems good to him, leave the house without speaking to the superior?

There is nothing restraining in M. Malbos. At least, he doesn't change; he respects no superior in his purposes; our customs of Annonay are nothing to him. I have ordered him very often to write you and take your advice..always he has refused. I don't know why--perhaps, he has done so without letting me know.

You tell me to try to be irreproachable. Alas! I would desire to be so, but the position has so many difficulties that in spite of my good will, I sometimes forget in the course of a year. I desire to be excused as I excuse the others for all that is not personal. I do not complain of injuries, of harsh words; all that is nothing and I pardon it from my heart.

After having acquainted you openly with my embarrassment and pains, I close leaving you perfectly free to do what you judge a propos. If you believe that I should continue to accept everything patiently, as I have up to now, I agree. But send me M. Vincent back as soon

as possible and, with him, someone who can assist him in his work of vigilance.

Adieu.....

Respectfully and affectionately,

J. M. Soulerin.

APPENDIX 9

Chronology of Pertinent Events

- November 21, 1822 - actual foundation of the Society of St. Basil--formal taking of promises under diocesan approval in Annonay, France.
- May 26, 1850 - Bishop Charbonnel consecrated for Toronto Diocese.
- September 21, 1850 - Bishop and Father Molony arrive in Toronto.
- August 22, 1852 - Fathers Soulerin, Malbos, and Messrs. Flannery and Vincent arrive in Toronto.
- September 4, 1852 - Community moves into Queen Street residence.
- September 24, 1852 - Community, in France, takes religious vows for the first time.
- November 16, 1852 - Fathers Soulerin and Malbos take vows.
- December 8, 1852 - Father Molony takes vows.
- December 26, 1852 - Messrs. Flannery and Vincent ordained sub-deacons.
- February 14, 1853 - Community moves into Palace.
- May 19, 1853 - Messrs. Flannery and Vincent ordained priests.

- July 9, 1855 - work begun on college and church at Clover Hill.
- September 17, 1855 - corner stone at Clover Hill blessed before 3000 spectators.
- December 3, 1855 - Hamilton and London dioceses cut out of Toronto diocese--Bishops Farrell and Pinsonneault consecrated for these dioceses, respectively.
- September 14, 1856 - Mass celebrated in St. Basil's church.
- September 15, 1856 - School work commenced in new St. Michael's College, Clover Hill.
- November 23, 1856 - New church and school formally opened.
- July 15, 1857 - Father Molony leaves for France with Father Vincent - latter only for a visit.
- October, 1857 - Father Malbos leaves for Assumption College, Sandwich, as superior.
- 1857-1858; 1870 - Basilians at Assumption College.
- September, 1859 - death of Father Tourvieille, Superior General of the Basilians--succeeded by Father Actorie.

- October 12, 1859 - Bishop Lynch consecrated bishop of Toronto.
- December, 1859 - During its first seven years, St. Michael's trained 6 priests, 1 deacon, 3 subdeacons, 7 theologians, and 15 other candidates for the priesthood.