

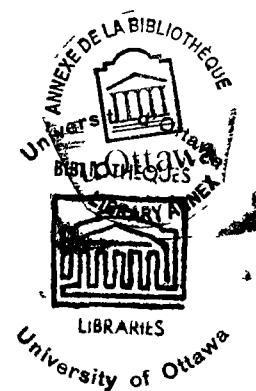
BOURGET AND THE DREAM OF A FREE
CHURCH IN QUEBEC, 1862-1878

by

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A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Ph.D. in History

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
OTTAWA, CANADA, 1975



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ABSTRACT

In the early 1860's, Ignace Bourget, bishop of Montreal began a struggle with the two most powerful religious institutions in French Canada, St-Sulpice and the Séminaire de Québec. He soon discovered that the traditional alliance between the clergy and the politicians worked in his adversaries' favor.

Bourget's confrontation with St-Sulpice, uncontested seigneur of Montreal for two hundred years, had the most far-reaching repercussions. In 1865, the Holy See permitted the bishop to dismember the immense parish of Notre Dame. Civil law had always recognized this episcopal prerogative. The Sulpicians, however, insisted on preserving their privileged position in the metropolis and, with the help of powerful political forces, successfully obstructed Bourget's operations. The State refused to recognize the newly dismembered parishes. The bishop remained firm. But he came to believe that the tried and true ways of protecting the Church's rights were terribly deficient.

An ideological debate ensued. Bourget's opponents, the "élitists", maintained that the Quebec Church enjoyed a privileged position unequalled anywhere in the world. Whatever imperfections existed, could be settled quietly between political and ecclesiastical leaders. They warned, however, that by flouting the law, Bourget endangered the harmonious relations between Church and State and threatened

to spark a religious war in Canada. The bishop replied that the Church's rights were guaranteed by the constitution. If political leaders refused to recognize them, the clergy would appeal directly to the people and their elected representatives.

The programme catholique was Bourget's response to the élitists. Far from attempting to establish a theocracy, the manifesto called for amendments to legislation dealing with matters traditionally thought to belong to the Church. These proposed changes would in no way affect Protestant rights in the province. The programme did not strive to create a Catholic Party. It merely called upon French Canadians, whatever their partisan affiliations, to show solidarity in promoting and defending Catholic rights. Bourget was seeking to broaden the base of the narrow alliance between prelates and the political élite, to include the Catholic population and all their elected officials. In this way, he thought, the Church's rights would be better protected.

The university question, at first a power struggle between Bourget and the Séminaire de Québec, also became embroiled in this ideological controversy. The Séminaire, Laval's governing council, wanted the university to mirror the intimate relations between the ecclesiastical and political élites. Its directors therefore called upon the Sulpicians and other élitist elements to staff Laval's proposed annex in Montreal. Bourget demanded a university

free from partisan pressures. He therefore turned to the Jesuits and independent Catholic laymen to help him achieve his objective. It was this same non-partisan concern which made the bishop try to stop Laval professors from becoming actively involved in politics. When these academics raised the question of undue influence, he retaliated with the full force of his office. However, in this conflict, Bourget was not attacking a specific political party, merely anti-clerics who exploited religion for electoral purposes.

The bishop of Montreal therefore created a movement which sought to make the Church independent of narrow partisan influence. This movement also served French Canadian nationalist aspirations because the churchman who was free of partisan pressures could criticize government policy without restriction and because Catholic rights were national rights in the nineteenth century. A powerful coalition of forces, threatened by Bourget's efforts, resisted him. They convinced Rome that the bishop was subverting religious harmony and the constitutional order itself. They finally triumphed and crushed his movement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	vi
Chapter I The Old Order and the New	1
Chapter II Montreal Wants a University	32
Chapter III Cartier Halts Dismemberment	67
Chapter IV Special Status for St-Sulpice	112
Chapter V The Ideological Confrontation	142
Chapter VI The "Gallican" University Assaulted	187
Chapter VII Taschereau Joins the Fray	219
Chapter VIII La Dette, Voila L'Ennemi!	257
Chapter IX Laval Triumphs	291
Chapter X Liberalism Unmasked	322
Chapter XI The Shattered Dream of an Independent Church	358
Conclusion	392
Bibliography	402

INTRODUCTION

Ultramontanism has had an elusive form in French Canadian historiography. To some, it has appeared as a militant political movement; to others, as an ideological phenomenon; others still have denied its existence. The problem in grasping ultramontanism is partly one of semantics. But the concept itself is so enduring and multi-faceted in the nineteenth century, that historians have had to analyze it in fragments. Without pretending to be comprehensive, the present thesis makes an attempt at an integrated interpretation. It focuses on the most nebulous aspect of ultramontanism, the overtly political phase of the 'seventies, as well as on its material and ideological causes. It then situates the ensuing polemics in a broader ideological context.

Political historians were the first to encounter ultramontanism. Semantic difficulties are most obvious in their studies because they simply appropriated contemporary labels to identify various opposing forces. Their works are so generously seasoned with the terms "liberal", "gallican", "ultramontane" as to be devoid of meaning. This confusing terminology reveals a failure to understand the causes of the ecclesiastical controversies of the 'seventies, especially the complex and drawn out dismemberment debate. Because these conflicts involved political questions, historians assumed that they were politically inspired and analyzed

them from this narrow perspective. They understandably exaggerated their political impact. These studies therefore provided a superficial and eclectic explanation of ultramontanist, combining exotic ideologies with contemporary prejudices.

To illustrate this pervasive political bias, a few examples will suffice. For Rumilly,¹ dismemberment was simply a question of Bourget's wanting legislators to follow his directives, not those of Cartier. Historians generally considered the programme catholique to be an abortive theocratic coup, an attempt to place the Church above the State, to subject political decisions to ecclesiastical scrutiny. Wade² characterized the subsequent confrontations as a holy war pitting Castor bishops, Laflèche and Bourget, against the Liberal-leaning Taschereau. The 1875 pastoral was nothing more than an attempt to destroy the Liberal Party. Wade and Lapiere³ singled out Bourget for his anti-Liberal campaigns. On the other hand, Taschereau was supposedly prompted to write his 1876 mandement because of his political inclinations.

According to this historiographic school, these ecclesiastical polemics gave rise to a political movement. David⁴ considered that the programmistes were creating a

1 R. Rumilly, Mgr. Laflèche et son temps. Editions Simpson, (Montréal, 1945).

2 M. Wade, The French Canadians. 2 vols. Macmillan, (Toronto, 1968).

3 L. Lapiere, "Politics, Race and Religion in French Canada. J. I. Tarte", Ph.D. history (Toronto, 1962).

4 L. O. David, Histoire du Canada depuis la Confédération. Beauchemin, (Montréal, 1909).

distinct political party. Wade called it a Catholic Party within the Conservative Party. Robertson⁵ criticized its abstract political platform which lacked popular appeal. He noted, however, that the majority of the clergy solidly supported it. Lapierre cited de Boucherville's coming to power as evidence that ultramontaniam had become a dominant political force in French Canada. Later on, he observed, that ultramontanians lacked a distinct federal programme and even referred to an ultramontane railroad policy.

How did these historians explain that the clergy dabbled in politics and that laymen gladly accepted the clerical yoke? De Celles⁶ believed the programme catholique to be the work of pretentious malcontents who rebelled against Cartier's authoritarianism. He accused them of usurping ecclesiastical authority. Taschereau himself could have written those words. De Celles, David, and Désilets⁷ regarded them as extremists. Finally, Lapierre, by taking J. I. Tarte as the archtypal ultramontane, suggested that political expediency drove politicians to embrace ultramontaniam.

The clergy, on the other hand, was impelled by a combination of zealotry and partisanship. Political historians

5 H. L. Robertson, "The Ultramontane Group in French Canada, 1867-1886", M.A. history (Queen's, 1952).

6 A. De Celles, Cartier et son temps. Beauchemin (Montréal, 1907).

7 A. Désilets, Hector-Louis Langevin, un père de la confédération canadienne. Presses de l'Université Laval, (Québec, 1969).

characterized Bourget as rigid, doctrinaire, and misguided. This latter-day Don Quixote saw a liberal in every Liberal. The Conservative De Celles argued that by supporting the programme catholique, the bishop became the unsuspecting victim of partisan forces. The Liberal David maintained that Bourget more or less unwittingly unleashed a white terror against an innocent Liberal Party. Wade accused the prelate of applying the doctrine of infallibility to the lowliest curate. The faceless clergy was indiscriminately tarred with partisanship. This judgemental approach was, of course, terribly one-sided. The shortcomings of one party were more glaring when isolated from the historical context.

Lavallée's⁸ recent study of the university question closely resembles this political school in its narrow perspective. He sees the ecclesiastical controversies of the later 'seventies and 'eighties as a by-product of financial problems and the traditional rivalry between Montreal and Quebec City. But whereas political historians resorted to broad ideological explanations to supplement their narrow interpretations, Lavallée denies this dimension altogether. In a sense his approach is clearer, more compact, less baroque. It is not new, however. In 1876, Cesare Roncetti, an influential official of the Propaganda, reduced the university conflict to a question of mere self-interest:

8 A. Lavallée, Québec contre Montréal: la querelle universitaire, 1876-1891. Presses de l'Université de Montréal, (Montréal, 1974).

the Jesuits wanted their estates restored to them; Taschereau claimed the revenue from these estates for Laval; Montrealers, including the clergy, demanded their own prestigious university so as not to be outdone by Quebec City. The Archdiocese of Quebec itself subscribed to a more biased variation of this theory.

The difficulty with Lavallée's thesis is that it discards the immediate ideological implications of the controversies which took place in the 'seventies. He is forced to adopt the Don Quixote hypothesis. Bourget and Laflèche, Lavallée asserts, were fighting a hopelessly anachronistic battle against liberalism, which had died some ten years earlier. The prelates, however, directed their efforts not so much against liberalism, as Catholic liberalism. Discovering what they meant by this term should tell the historian something about the nature of the polemics in the 'seventies. Lavallée is quite correct in saying that Bourget's resignation indicated the failure of a movement, but that movement was not ultra-montanism. Because his thesis begins with the bishop's departure, he cannot appreciate the wider dimensions of the university conflict which burgeoned in the preceding period. Although his analysis probes intensively the material aspect of the university question, it remains truncated.

Oddly enough, an ideological approach to ultra-montanism was late in coming. Scholars at Laval University,

Philippe Sylvain,⁹ Pierre Savard,¹⁰ and Fernand Dumont¹¹ were mainly responsible for delineating some of its key characteristics. From their works, ultramontanism emerged as an authoritarian, intolerant, anti-intellectual, anti-democratic, Rome-centered movement. It yearned to re-integrate French Canadians, torn by political passion and seduced by the prospect of material gain, into a French-speaking, Catholic, agrarian state. It idealized the past and condemned any tendency which threatened this static and monolithic ideal.

Was ultramontanism a predominant ideology or the creed of an extremist fringe group? Sylvain chose Bourget's conflict with the Institut Canadien to substantiate his definition of ultramontanism, while Savard saw Tardivel as the prototype of an ultramontane layman. This would seem to confirm the second hypothesis and concur with political historiography.

Yet, no one denies the Roman character of the Quebec Church. Aubert¹² noted that the provincial hierarchy pro-

9 P. Sylvain, "Libéralisme et ultramontanisme au Canada: affrontement idéologique et doctrinal, 1840-1865", in W. L. Morton, ed., The Shield of Achilles. McClelland and Stewart, (Toronto, 1968).

10 P. Savard, Jules-Paul Tardivel, la France et les Etats-Unis. Presses de l'Université Laval, (Québec, 1967).

11 F. Dumont, "Idéologies au Canada Français: quelques réflexions d'ensemble", in F. Dumont, ed., Les Idéologies au Canada Français. Presses de l'Université Laval. (Québec, 1971).

12 R. Aubert, Le Pontificat de Pie IX. Bloud et Gay, (Paris, 1952).

nounced the pope infallible twice before the Vatican Council. The clergy unanimously and passionately decried Italy's spoliation of the papal states. Savard¹³ clearly illustrated that the Séminaire de Québec was orientated toward Rome both emotionally and intellectually. Was the Archdiocese not the first to send its priests to study theology in Rome?

That the Church refused to tolerate the Rouges is equally obvious. Monet¹⁴ described how the clergy's marriage to the Bleus evolved. The Archdiocese, the Sulpicians, and other "liberal" elements endorsed Bourget's war against the Institut Canadien. The hierarchy unanimously condemned the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council's sentence on Guibord's burial. Liberal newspapers were proscribed in every diocese.

Savard¹⁵ established that the trend to centralize authority was widespread in the Quebec Church in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Analysts have especially focused on Bourget's authoritarianism. But, the Archdiocesan clergy, Liberal and ultra-conservative, expressed similar grievances about Taschereau. The Archbishop never established a Cathedral Chapter and steadfastly refused to call a diocesan synod. At times, he consulted a handful

13 P. Savard, "La Vie du clergé québécois au XIXe siècle", Recherches sociographiques, VIII (sept.-déc, 1967). "Le Journal de l'abbé Benjamin Paquet, Etudiant à Rome, 1863-66", Culture, XXVI (mars 1965).

14 J. Monet, "French Canadian Nationalism and the Challenge of Ultramontanism", Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers (1966).

15 Savard, "Vie".

of priests at the Séminaire, but often reached decisions on the spur of the moment. His much-admired toleration did not include ideas which jeopardized his intimate relations with civil authority. Priests criticizing the educational system or legislation dealing with ecclesiastical matters were unwelcome in his diocese. Those who had the misfortune of incurring his wrath felt the crushing weight of his authority.

Finally, the Quebec Church enthusiastically promoted colonization campaigns in order to recuperate French Canadians who had emigrated to the United States. Thus, the entire Church, not just a fragment, was authoritarian, intolerant, traditionalistic, Rome-oriented, anti-intellectual. Ultramontanism was its only ideology in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The polemics of the 'seventies operated within this ideological consensus. The clergy as a body was committed to ultramontane aspirations. They were determined to preserve the links between Church and State. Their own alliance with politicians seemed to typify the harmony between Catholic principles and civil authority. But the long honeymoon between the Bleus and the clergy began to break down in the diocese of Montreal.

Understanding the dismemberment question is crucial to grasping the subsequent controversies. Most political historians alluded to it, but failed to appreciate its implications. Out of Bourget's power struggle with the Sulpicians, there erupted an ideological confrontation which

came to involve the whole Church. It concerned the modalities, not the essence of ultramontanism. This polemic had a strong impact on the university question which, in turn, intensified the polarization of forces. The programme catholique and other political developments must be situated within that context. From this integrated perspective, the present thesis hopes to provide a fresh interpretation of Bourget's contribution to his Church and people.

CHAPTER I
THE OLD ORDER AND THE NEW

The roots of the antagonism between the Sulpicians and their bishop stretched back in history. It was plainly a matter of conflicting rights and jurisdictions in a society complicated by transportation and communication problems. Like his predecessors, Ignace Bourget of Montreal complained that the Sulpicians flouted ecclesiastical authority. By the 1860's, however, the often stormy relationship reached a critical point. In Bourget's mind, the spectacular increase of Montreal created a new urgency. The old order with its overlapping jurisdictions was impeding the smooth administration of the immense parish of Montreal; his rapidly increasing flock was not receiving adequate spiritual care. The close proximity in which Catholics and Protestants lived did nothing to allay his worries. He therefore demanded that Rome fully recognize his episcopal powers. He wanted the Sulpicians to be subject to him both as a religious order and as pastor in perpetuity of Notre Dame.

The Seminary of St-Sulpice remained firm. Invoking long-established privileges formally recognized by the Crown, the Holy See, and by the bishop of Montreal himself, they passionately defended the status quo. Their administration, they argued, had produced a contented and grateful populace.

Why tamper with it? Clearly, the new working class districts springing up on the periphery of the old city did not alarm them.

From 1862 to 1865, the Propaganda Fide, the Congregation charged with this matter, preferred to play a conciliatory role. It did not wish to revoke abruptly the 200-year old Sulpician privileges, nor to ignore the bishop's rights. Of course, the Cardinals of the Propaganda applied pressure on the Sulpicians in late 1865, but without their intervention, a laboriously-established compromise would have failed. On the whole, they left the initiative of a mutually acceptable agreement to the parties themselves. The pontifical decree of December 1865, reflected this weakness. The Holy See's refusal to assume a more directive and perhaps coercive role in the face of their mutual intransigence and hostility helps to explain why the decree failed.

* * *

When the question of Notre Dame's administration was raised in earnest, Mgr. Bourget had governed his diocese for over twenty years. His episcopate coincided with Montreal's fantastic burgeoning. To meet the growing spiritual and material needs of the inhabitants, Bourget established a wide-range of institutions to supplement those under Sulpician auspices. He did so with the help of Catholic philanthropists and of religious orders which came from France or were founded in Canada. The bishop worked without respite, whatever the

state of his health. He delegated authority reluctantly and was indiscriminately dedicated to all aspects of his work. No task was too insignificant or monumental. His energy, spontaneous warmth, and enthusiasm won him deeply loyal friends and gave him charisma. His naiveté, persistence, and frankness created eternal enmities. Bourget had two passionate commitments: Rome and his episcopal office.

Bourget often denied having instigated the controversy over Notre Dame's administration. In fact, the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda first raised the issue in 1855. While reviewing diocesan business with the bishop, Barnabò had expressed surprise that a city of some 70,000 people still contained one parish.¹ On his fourth visit to Rome in 1862, the bishop again reported on his diocese to the Propaganda. He indicated that the Sulpicians had built church-annexes to relieve the pressure on Notre Dame, the large parish church, and to meet their parishioners' growing spiritual needs. However, he considered the solution patently inadequate.² Barnabò decided to write to Dominique Granet, the Sulpician Superior in Montreal, requesting information about the parish administration.³ For the next three years, the

1 Archivio della Propaganda Fide, Roma (APFR), Scritture Riferite nei Congressi (SC), America Settentrionale, 1862-65, VIII, Bourget à Dominique Granet, 30 avril 1863.

Archives de la Chancellerie de l'Archevêché de Montréal (ACAM), Registre de Lettres de Mgr. Bourget (RLB) 14, Bourget à Granet, 11 nov. 1864.

APFR, SC1862-65, Bourget à Barnabò, 24 sept. 65.

2 APFR, SC1862-65 Bourget à Barnabò, 9 mai 63.

3 Archives de la Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice, Montréal (ASSM) Barnabò à Granet, 27 janv. 63.

debate over the rights of the respective parties raged on, culminating in the pontifical decree.

Bourget advocated a new order for the parish of Montreal. To Granet he wrote: "il est question ici d'un mode d'administration, inconnu à vos anciens, et qui doit répondre aux besoins du temps."⁴ The Sulpicians' administration, he believed, was anachronistic. It harked back to an era when communication between Montreal and Québec City proved difficult. Bourget noted that over the nineteenth century, the discretionary powers of bishops in missionary countries gradually had decreased as communications improved with the Holy See. Similarly, the Sulpicians' privileged position should be modified to reflect changed conditions.⁵ Montreal now had a bishop. The new order required that canon law govern the diocese and the parish of Notre Dame. Bourget told Barnabò: "Aussi, mon désir le plus ardent est-il de faire régner dans toutes les parties du vaste diocèse, qui m'est confié, toutes les règles que nous a tracées la Sainte Eglise Romaine."⁶

The Bishop of Montreal saw a pressing need to define authority in the parish. It was impossible, he claimed, to know or understand the guiding principles of an old order, based on two hundred years of unwritten Sulpician tradition. What guarantees were there against arbitrary rule? The administration had already produced disputes between him and

4 APFR, SC 1862-65 Bourget à Granet, 30 avr. 63.

5 ACAM, 901.136, Observations de l'Evêque de Montréal sur le Concordati Schema a Caval, 1865.

6 APFR, SC 1862-65 Bourget à Barnabò, 9 mai 63.

the Sulpicians and rivalry among religious communities.⁷ The parishioners of Notre Dame suffered most from this unhealthy competition. Bourget wanted to stop an administration characterized by independence from episcopal authority.

His criticism centered primarily on the immense discretionary powers wielded by the Sulpician Superior. Bourget noted that canon law empowered the bishop alone to appoint pastors to their cures. However, the Sulpician Superior automatically became pastor of Notre Dame by being elected head of the Order. His curial authority seemed to come, not from the bishop, but from his colleagues. No custom could possibly justify this flagrant abuse of ecclesiastical law. Bourget conceded that the Seminary had been entrusted to the cure of Notre Dame in perpetuity. But, this did not dispense the Superior from being invested as pastor by the bishop. Bourget was distinguishing the long-term aspects of the cure, which belonged to an institution, the Seminary, from its day to day administration entrusted to an individual, the pastor.⁸

The Superior also performed tasks traditionally reserved for the bishop. Aided by the community's governing council, he alone appointed the curates serving in various church-annexes, the superiors, chaplains and confessors of certain religious congregations, and the missionaries at the Lake of

⁷ APFR, SC 1862-65, Scritture Originali Riferite in Congregazioni Generali (SOCG) (sept. 1865), Bourget à Barnabò, 29 sept. 1863.

⁸ ACAM, RLB 14, Mémoire Bourget sur la cure de Montréal, 9 nov. 64.

Two Mountains Indian reserve. Custom was again invoked to justify the Superior's actions.⁹ The head of the Order unilaterally determined the size and location of church-annexes to be built in the city.¹⁰ He had exclusive control over his subjects' movements to and from the diocese.¹¹

It was bad enough that Bourget was not consulted about these matters. But, not to be told about them, that was the rub. More often than not, the public was his source of information.¹² He claimed to have learned some of the rules governing the Sulpician Order only because the State requested their publication before confirming the Seminary's land titles in 1840.¹³

The Sulpicians, Bourget asserted, administered the parish as if there were no bishop in Montreal. They had strenuously opposed the establishment of episcopal authority in the city¹⁴ and were still reluctant to accept it. "...Chaque fois que j'ai cru devoir faire dans (leur) paroisse, quelques fonctions curiales, en ma qualité d'Evêque ... je me suis aperçu que ça déplaisait au Séminaire."¹⁵

9 ACAM, RLB 13, Bourget à Barnabò, 29 sept. 1863.

10 Ibid., RLB 14, Mémoire Bourget, 9 nov. 64.

11 Ibid., RLB 13, Bourget à Barnabò, 29 sept. 1863.

12 Ibid., RLB 14, Mémoire Bourget, 9 nov. 1864.

13 APFR, SC 1862-65 Bourget à Granet, 30 avr. 1863.

14 ACAM, RLB 13, Mémoire Bourget, 29 sept. 1863. See L. Lemieux, L'Etablissement de la première province ecclésiastique au Canada, 1783-1844. Fides (Montréal et Paris, 1967), pp. 139-166.

15 APFR, SC 1862-65 Bourget à Granet, 25 oct. 1863.

C. E. Fabre, a Cathedral Canon and future bishop of Montreal, observed that the Order ran the parish like they did the Grand Seminary. They apparently believed that divine providence itself had given them that authority.

Je ne conteste pas la bonne volonté des Messieurs de S. Sulpice,.... Ce qu'il y a de certain c'est que leur amour pour Rome n'existe qu'en autant qu'il en faut pour être catholiques, mais ils estiment encore plus haut l'opinion des leurs que celle de la Cour Romaine.¹⁶

Apart from delimiting authority, Bourget also wanted to improve spiritual care. A centralized parish administration was no longer viable. Notre Dame extended over a territory eleven miles long by five miles wide. Within these perimeters, the Catholic population had increased by 5,000 in three years to reach 80,000 by 1864.¹⁷ The rate of growth showed no signs of slowing down, instead it threatened to accelerate. The Seminary neither had the manpower nor the financial resources to keep pace with the rapid population expansion. Another important factor was "... le mélange de religions et de nations, dans notre ville, ... combien par conséquent notre vigilance pastorale doit être active pour conserver nos Catholiques et convertir nos Protestants."¹⁸

Centralization, the bishop believed, was essentially impersonal. The pastor of Notre Dame could not possibly know all his parishioners as canon law required. Nor was this situation likely to improve. The bishop had reason

16 ACAM, 901.151, Fabre à Bourget, 18 (?) juil. 1863.

17 Ibid., RLB 14, Mémoire Bourget, 9 nov. 1864.

18 Ibid., 901.057, Bourget à Barnabò, 27 avr. 1862.

to believe that the population would reach 200,000 by 1875.

Avec un tel accroissement et d'après toutes les prévisions les plus probables, Montréal sera dans peu d'années, une des plus populeuses villes de notre Amérique. Sera-t-il possible à un seul curé de connaître, de nourrir et de défendre tant de brebis, dont la responsabilité pèsera sur sa conscience?¹⁹

Canon Fabre stated that the Superior could not even offer his priests adequate pastoral counselling because administration monopolized all his time. Since no one effectively supervised parish work, curates were not committed to their tasks. They visited the suburbs superficially and infrequently, if at all.

The fact that annexes had no fixed territory created additional problems. Parishioners were free to attend Notre Dame or their local church for Sunday services. This meant that curates really never got to know the people of their district. To complicate matters, the Superior often transferred these priests. They responded to this unstable situation in one of two ways. Either pastoral work became unimportant; or they complained about the lack of responsibility.

Ce n'est pas tout d'avoir des hommes d'oraison et des hommes d'études, mais il faut encore avoir des hommes pratiques qui connaissent le coeur humain, c'est ce que l'on ne peut pas trouver dans la Cure de Montréal avec le système actuel.²⁰

Apart from being impersonal, this centralized structure provided inadequate spiritual care. Bourget quoted from the Montreal Police Commissioner's report of 1863 to illustrate

19 ACAM, 901.136, Mémoire Bourget à la S.C. de la Propagande, 18 fév. 1865.

20 Ibid., 901.151 Fabre à Bourget, 18(?) juil. 1863.

the increasing incidence of vice in the city, particularly drunkenness and prostitution. Greater decentralization, he thought, would check this dangerous trend.²¹ Under the current system, there was no method to administering the sacraments: they were given both at the annexes and at Notre Dame. If local churches had a fixed territory and population, priests could keep better track of who received the sacraments and how often.²² Their vigilance would not only discourage vice, but promote virtue.

Improving spiritual care required more facilities to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding city. Canon Fabre stingingly remarked that the Seminary had built two large churches, Notre Dame for the French Canadians and St-Patrick for the Irish, to maintain a total monopoly of parish life. Bourget noted that these buildings dragged the Sulpicians deeply into debt. With a greater degree of foresight, they could have dispensed with these extravagances and have built more annexes.²³ Fabre also observed that the Sulpicians constructed churches only when forced by circumstances. Their choice of location was arbitrary, without regard to the needs of the population. Notre Dame de Grâce was erected in a virtually uninhabited part of the city as a compromise between two populated districts. Pointe St-Charles, another working class sector, neither had a

21 ACAM, 901.136 Mémoire Bourget, 18 fév. 1865.

22 Ibid., RLB 14 Mémoire Bourget, 9 nov. 1864.

23 Ibid., RLB 13 Bourget à Barnabò, 29 sept. 1863.

church nor a chapel. St-Joseph was built because the cathedral was to go up in the vicinity. The Canon speculated that without the bishop's presence and without the Jesuits and Oblates, there would still be one church in Montreal.

Les oeuvres faites par les prêtres étrangers au Séminaire ont excité ou le zèle ou la jalousie du curé et de ses vicaires.... Souvent ils ont eu la maladresse de faire connaître leur mécontentement aux laïques.²⁴

Bourget was equally severe. He maintained that he was the first to urge that more churches and chapels be built because the poor transportation facilities severely restricted access to Notre Dame. The Seminary

a donc compris qu'il fallait donner justice aux pauvres Catholiques qui se trouvaient à une trop grande distance de l'Eglise Paroissiale. Mais on l'a compris que lorsque l'Eveque, qui n'avait pas les memes vues de centralisation que le Séminaire, (a fait) bâtir des Eglises de quartier. La certitude que les fidèles se porteraient avec affluence à ces Eglises locales, fit prendre au Séminaire la résolution de construire....²⁵

In 1848, he asked the Sulpicians to construct a church in Faubourg Québec. Because they procrastinated indefinitely, he turned to the Oblates. He himself put up a chapel in Coteau St-Louis, and brought in the Clercs de St-Viateur to staff it. He instigated the Sulpicians to erect St-Jacques, Ste-Anne and St-Vincent.²⁶ These experiences, however, proved unhappy. Too often the Seminary seemed suspicious, recalcitrant, anxious to preserve its autonomy and monopoly.

²⁴ ACAM, 901.151 Fabre à Bourget, 18(?) juil. 1863.

²⁵ Ibid., RLB 13, Mémoire Bourget, 29 sept. 1863.

²⁶ Ibid., RLB 14, Mémoire Bourget, 9 nov. 1864.

An unhealthy spirit of competition once again permeated the clergy.

To remedy all these problems, Bourget proposed two things. First, the bishop had to exert greater control over his Seminary. The unchecked movement of Sulpicians between Montreal and Paris would have to cease.²⁷ Bourget also required a detailed yearly account of the parish and the community's administration, as the Council of Trent stipulated.²⁸ Finally, the bishop wanted to invest the Superior as pastor of Notre Dame on his election to office. This appointment would be subject to revocation.

Bourget's second proposal was that Notre Dame be divided into smaller units, each having a defined territory and pastor. He expected to carry out the dismemberment in the "manière accoutumée de chez nous, et conformément à notre droit canonique et civil, qui seul peut nous offrir des garanties sûres, pour le bien de la paix."²⁹ The bishop foresaw no difficulty in erecting seven or eight new parishes, since there were already a number of churches and chapels in the city. He could, if necessary establish three outside Sulpician auspices.³⁰

The Sulpicians rested their claims on titles granted by the spiritual and temporal authorities. Both Rome and London

27 APFR, Acta ab Congregatione Propagandae Fidei, (sept. 1865) f. 555.

28 ACAM, RLB 13, Mémoire Bourget, 29 sept. 1863.

29 Ibid., 901.058, Bourget à Alexis Truteau, 24 oct. 1865.

30 Ibid., 901.058, Bourget à Truteau, 31 mai 1865. Presumably the Cathedral-chapel, the Jesuit church (Gesû), and the Oblate Church, St-Pierre, would form the nuclei of these new parishes.

had approved the order of things in Montreal. In 1831, the Propaganda Fide tacitly recognized the Sulpician right of free movement between France and Canada. A pontifical decree issued in December of that year appeared to sanction Sulpician independence in administering Notre Dame. At least, Cardinal Pedicini, then Prefect of the Propaganda, said so in a letter to the parties involved. Whatever the real meaning of the decree, one fact was clear. Rome was greatly reluctant to alter the established order without the consent of both the Seminary and the bishop.³¹ The Royal Ordonnance of 1840 recognized the Sulpicians' land titles, incorporated the community, and specified how their seigneurial revenues would be apportioned.³² Finally, Bourget issued a pastoral letter on May 24, 1843, declaring the Sulpician Superior pastor in perpetuity of Montreal.³³ The Seminary argued that the status quo which had pontifical, royal, and even episcopal approbation could not be modified without some difficulty and indeed some danger.

The Sulpicians argued that the people had uttered not a single word of complaint against their stewardship. On the contrary, they were grateful for the good works which the Seminary proliferated throughout the city. Carrière, Superior General of the Order, and Alexandre Baile,

31 Lemieux, 309-12.

32 Lemieux, 454-55.

33 ACAM, RLB 13, Mémoire Bourget, 29 sept. 1863.

Superior of the Grand Séminaire, proudly related the community's accomplishments in the areas of education, social services and pastoral work.³⁴ The Sulpicians had built primary schools, frequented free of charge by some 6,000 children of the city and suburbs. Their Collège de Montréal dispensed classical education to the élite in the metropolitan area. The Grand Séminaire received candidates for the priesthood from several dioceses in Europe and North America. St-Sulpice provided social assistance from the cradle to the grave. Three priests cared full-time for the needy. Mutual aid associations, set up under Sulpician auspices, financially assisted widows, orphans, the sick, and covered burial expenses for the poor. The Seminary also looked after the spiritual and material welfare of the Indians at the Lake of Two Mountains reserve.

In parish work, the Sulpicians felt that they had kept pace with the population increase. Since Bourget had become bishop, the number of Sulpicians doubled. In 1863, 42 out of 57 were committed to pastoral care. The Seminary had also built numerous places of worship throughout the city. Religious services in the suburbs were held in two churches and three chapels. "Peut-on dire que cette portion de notre paroisse, qui est cependant la plus difficile à desservir, n'a pas tous les secours que peuvent avoir les fidèles qui habitent les paroisses les mieux servies du diocèse de Montréal."³⁵ Excluding Notre Dame and St-Patrick,

³⁴ APFR, SOCG (. sept. 1865) Mémoire Baile-Carrière, 11 juil. 1863.

³⁵ ASSM, Réponse au Mémoire de Mgr de Montréal sur la division de la paroisse, L. Villeneuve, 15 déc. 1864.

Montreal had eight Sulpician churches and chapels attended by as many priests, six of whom resided in their area. In addition, the bishop, the Jesuits, and the Oblates each had their own place of worship.

The conclusion was obvious: the Sulpicians went to great lengths to take good care of their parishioners. They admitted that their financial and human resources had been strained with the population increase, but they fulfilled their commitments without a burdensome debt. In fact, their revenues had doubled in the previous twenty years. "Cela nous paraît suffisant pour démontrer que nos entreprises ne sont pas tout à fait laissées à l'abandon, et que notre système d'administration n'est pas si pitoyable qu'il fût urgent de le dénoncer au St-Siège."³⁶

The bishop's allegations about their poor church-building record especially stung the Sulpicians. They depicted him as an impulsive, overzealous, and at times imprudent man. Had the Seminary not sought the bishop's approval before erecting churches? Had Bourget not encouraged them in these endeavors and had he not blessed their churches? And yet, he complained to the Propaganda. How could one explain such contradictory behavior?

Bourget was also described as an ungrateful man. When his church, St-Jacques, burned to the ground, the Sulpicians offered to rebuild it and assume its cure. They thereby spared the bishop great embarrassment because he had decided

³⁶ ASSM, Mémoire du Séminaire de St-Sulpice en réponse aux accusations de Mgr. Bourget, Baile, 4 janv. 1864.

to erect a new cathedral in a more central location, west of St-Jacques, much to the disapproval of east-end inhabitants. The Sulpicians also offered Bourget a building site for his cathedral and would have eagerly delimited a territory to make it self-sufficient as a parish church. The bishop, however, rejected their generous offer.³⁷ They compared their church-building record with Bourget's and concluded that he could hardly cast stones considering his quite meagre performance.

The case was clear. The status quo was established legitimately; it produced a great many material and spiritual benefits; the people most directly concerned with it were happy. Only a handful wanted to subvert a system which had evolved over two hundred years. Who could predict the dire consequences of change? Divine providence itself seemed to decree this order of things. "Notre unique désir est de cultiver cette partie de la vigne qui semble nous être échue en partage, par un effet particulier de la volonté de Dieu."³⁸ But, what did status quo mean? The Sulpicians defined it as opposition to dismemberment, retention of the prevailing administration, and independence as a religious community.

The Seminary resisted the division of Notre Dame mostly for temporal reasons. The first impediment was the enormous debt, some \$350,000 weighing heavily on the Fabrique

³⁷ ASSM, Mémoire Baile, 4 janv. 1864.
Mémoire Villeneuve, 15 déc. 1864.

³⁸ APFR, SOCG Mémoire Carrière-Baile, 11 juil. 1863.

of Notre Dame. Civil law required that parishes be free of these obligations before dismemberment could take place. If Notre Dame were partitioned, the fabriques to be created would have to share the large debt. There was little likelihood that they would want to do so. Nor would they have the necessary funds. The Sulpicians reminded Bourget that without their financial support the Fabrique would go bankrupt.

The mixed Catholic population also made dismemberment difficult.³⁹ Irish and French were scattered throughout the city and suburbs. Good relations existed between the two groups. The Irish attended their national church, St-Patrick, around which had sprung several organizations and institutions. But, if Bourget established new parishes, the two linguistic communities would have to share the same churches. The problems involved inevitably would lead to misunderstanding, jealousy and confrontation. The experiment had been tried in some American cities with tragic results.⁴⁰

Finally, the Seminary invoked the Ordonnance of 1840 as a barrier to dismemberment. The royal decree defined the nature and extent of the Seminary's obligations to Montreal. Should the Sulpicians unilaterally alter these commitments, they would jeopardize their holdings which the British Government only recognized eighty years after the Conquest.⁴¹ The spectre of expropriation was raised.

39 ASSM, Mémoire adressé au Cardinal Barnabò sur la demande de son Eminence, 20 mars 1863.

40 ACAM, 901.136, Bourget à Barnabò, 18 fév. 1865.

41 ASSM, Mémoire Granet, 20 mars 1863.

What had befallen the Jesuits and Récollets could happen again to the Sulpicians.

St-Sulpice maintained that the parish administration was basically sound. The suggestion that the bishop be included in it was firmly resisted. The Sulpicians held to their Superior's primacy. Weakening his authority, they feared, would destroy their cohesion and considerably encumber parish government. The Superior had to enjoy absolute freedom to dispose of his priests as he saw fit. He knew them more intimately than did the bishop and was therefore better placed to assign them to parish functions.⁴² This system had produced no major inconvenience in the past. The Superior had never been accused of abusing his power.⁴³ He shifted his curates only when absolutely necessary.⁴⁴ How could the system possibly be improved? If priests were permanently assigned to a parish, they would be better off than their Superior who was subject to election every five years. On the other hand, if they could be removed, why should the system be altered?⁴⁵ The stability which Bourget sought with innovation already existed.

Apart from the Superior's primacy, the Sulpicians wished to maintain their monopoly of the cure. At first,

42 APFR, SOCG Mémoire Carrière-Baile, 11 juil. 1863.

43 ASSM, Mémoire Granet, 20 mars 1863.

44 Ibid., Mémoire Villeneuve, 15 déc. 1864.

45 Ibid., Mémoire Granet, 20 mars 1863.

they expressed willingness to build annexes with the bishop's consent "dans les lieux où elles seront jugées nécessaires."⁴⁶ Almost a year later, Baile made a much more pointed assertion. "Nous ne croyons pas dans l'ordre qu'il se batisse des églises ... dans une paroisse, et surtout dans une paroisse telle que la nôtre, sans que le curé soit aucunement consulté."⁴⁷ The Sulpicians had been irked by the building of two churches, St-Pierre and the Gésu without their prior knowledge.

St-Sulpice wanted to preserve restrictions which excluded other religious communities from pastoral duties. Otherwise, they feared, the good relations existing among them would deteriorate rapidly.⁴⁸ They also insisted that the Propaganda reassert this restriction, because Bourget placed unfair pressure on the Seminary to cede various churches to other religious Orders. The bishop was quite displeased when the Sulpicians refused. But, such was their prerogative.⁴⁹

To Bourget's accusation that the status quo deprived him of the most elementary parish information, Baile retorted that this problem was not inherent in the administration. It never was St-Sulpice's policy to keep

46 ASSM, Mémoire Granet 20 mars 1863.

47 Ibid., Mémoire Baile, 4 janv. 1864.

48 Ibid., Mémoire Granet, 20 mars 1863.

49 Ibid., Mémoire Baile 4 janv. 1864.

the bishop uninformed about parochial matters. Such unfortunate gaps could be explained by some oversight or misunderstanding.⁵⁰

The status quo also meant that St-Sulpice should enjoy internal autonomy as a religious community. This independence, however, would be circumscribed by respect for episcopal authority.⁵¹ The concept of autonomy included St-Sulpice's property. Baile acknowledged that the Grand Séminaire presented a yearly report of the funds which the diocese provided for the care of its students. This met with the prescriptions of the Council of Trent.

Pour ce qui est de nos autres biens, il faut se rappeler que notre communauté, bien qu'elle porte ici le nom de Séminaire, ne ressemble pourtant en rien aux établissements de ce nom que le St-Concile soumet à la reddition de leurs comptes. Nous sommes une société de prêtres séculiers ... et nous percevons, comme ecclésiastiques, aucune sorte de subside, ni des fidèles, ni du clergé, ni de l'Evêque, ni du gouvernement....⁵²

The Sulpicians professed their submission to episcopal authority. They denied having been opposed to the establishment of a diocese in Montreal. Their sole concern had been to preserve their community's integrity. When Lartique was named first bishop of Montreal, there were plans afoot to install him in the Seminary and to transform the parish church into his cathedral. This would have destroyed their community. They naturally

50 ASSM, Mémoire Baile, 4 janv. 1864.

51 Ibid., Mémoire Villeneuve, 15 déc. 1864.

52 Ibid., Mémoire Baile, 4 janv. 1864.

resisted. Otherwise, a spirit of deference had always characterized their relations with the bishop. Numerous examples were mentioned of customs which the Seminary abandoned because they were prejudicial to episcopal authority. In conformity with Bourget's wishes, they had introduced several liturgical changes which annoyed parishioners and tired their own members.⁵³ Clearly, the bishop enjoyed the same authority in Montreal as in the rest of his diocese.⁵⁴ The Sulpicians, however, felt that Bourget only responded to their good will with distrust. "Nous n'avons eu qu'à gémir en silence des sentiments de défiance qui respirent dans ses lettres à nos supérieurs et des reproches qu'il nous à adressés si souvent."⁵⁵

As arguments and counter-arguments were formulated, relations between the episcopal palace and the Seminary became strained. Throughout 1865, the year of conciliation proceedings in Rome, Canon Octave Paré, Bourget's secretary, advised against concessions. He wanted the bishop to put the Seminary in its place.⁵⁶ Should the status quo be confirmed, "la Religion n'y gagnera pas beaucoup et ... l'autorité épiscopale sera non seulement molle, mais même ... méprisée et foulée aux pieds...."⁵⁷

53 ASSM, Mémoire Baile, 4 janv. 1864.

54 APFR, Mémoire Carrière-Baile, 11 juil. 1863.

55 ASSM, Mémoire Villeneuve, 15 déc. 1864.

56 ACAM, 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 12 janv. 1865.

57 Ibid, 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 16 déc. 1864.

Wary of Sulpician influence in Rome, Paré was not as confident as Bourget in the Propaganda's impartiality. The Roman Congregation, he observed, seemed to lead the bishop around like a child by offering him sops. "C'est un peu ce que nous avons toujours pensé, et même ce que nous avons dit à V. Grandeur qui a toujours eu une autre idée de ses juges...."⁵⁸ Bourget he feared would become "le valet de St-Sulpice".

A note of bitterness also crept into the bishop's references to the Seminary. He accused the Sulpicians of bad faith for not defining the term "status quo" until their brief of February, 1865. They had in fact stated quite explicitly what they understood by the term in earlier documents. But, these had never been communicated to the bishop. "Que serait-il arrivé," he asked, "si j'étais tombé dans le piège qui m'était tendu par le Séminaire en acceptant de bonne foi ce statu quo ... ? (L'Evêque) aurait signé à l'aveugle un acte qui l'aurait lié lui et ses successeurs, tellement qu'il n'aurait plus bronché devant St-Sulpice..."⁵⁹

Bourget stood his ground. He insisted that the Seminary take the initiative in offering concessions, so as not to compromise episcopal authority.⁶⁰ The bishop also wanted the Propaganda to make a clear-cut and detailed decision on all contentious points so that "le

58 ACAM, 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 5 mai 1865.

59 Ibid, Registres et Cahiers Divers (RCD) 107, Bourget à Baile, 20 fév. 1865.

60 APFR, SC 1862-65, Bourget à Barnabò, 24 sept. 1865.

Séminaire ne puisse pas se prévaloir du plus petit équivoque, pour se maintenir dans ses prétentions."⁶¹ The judgement had to be based on canon law.

Bourget disputed the obstacles to dismemberment. The Fabrique debt was an insignificant question when compared with the bountiful spiritual benefits of the new order.⁶² The Seminary could sell some valuable, but non-essential, property to liquidate these commitments.⁶³ In any case, Bourget claimed that the Propaganda should not concern itself with such matters, entrusting them instead to the bishop.

With regard to the mixed population, the Seminary's dire predictions simply would not come to pass. In Ottawa, French and Irish shared the same churches without consequence. The bishop, however, was prepared to build separate places of worship for the Irish. "Les fidèles y gagneraient, parce qu'ils auraient leurs églises à leurs portes...."⁶⁴

Bourget dismissed out of hand the Royal Ordonnance as a barrier to dismemberment. He expressed surprise "... d'entendre le Séminaire revendiquer la loi civile, pour se soustraire à la loi ecclésiastique."⁶⁵ The Sulpicians appeared to be using tactics common to gallicans in seventeenth-century France. It had never been the

61 ACAM, RCD 107, Bourget à Barnabò, 20 fév. 1865.

62 APFR, SOCG Mémoire Bourget, 18 fév. 1865.

63 ACAM, 901.058 Bourget à Truteau, 31 mai 1865.

64 Ibid., 901.136 Mémoire Bourget, 18 fév. 1865.

65 APFR, SOCG Mémoire Bourget, 18 fév. 1865.

government's intention to compel them to serve permanently the entire territory of the present parish. Such a task went beyond their financial and human resources.⁶⁶

Throughout 1865, the Sulpicians intimated to the Propaganda that they would leave Montreal if the order of things were altered too drastically. Confirming the threat initially made by Baile, Granet asserted that the bishop's claims were so far-fetched that the Sulpicians would be forced to choose between their existence as a community and their presence in Montreal. They would exist in name only if the Propaganda met his demands. The congregation's spirit would be totally destroyed.⁶⁷

During 1865, St-Sulpice also explicitated some of their earlier claims, further restricting episcopal power. They demanded that Bourget not be allowed to build churches nor bring religious communities into the parish without the Seminary's consent. In case of disagreement, the parties would turn to Rome for a final decision.⁶⁸ In addition, the Sulpicians asked that, if some form of dismemberment were considered necessary, the Propaganda itself should establish the boundaries.⁶⁹

Faced with the parties' growing intransigence, Rome continued to aim for a compromise. Lodovico Jacobini, an outside consultor, presented the Propaganda with an opinion

66 ACAM, 901.158, Bourget à Truteau, 31 mai 1865.

67 Ibid, 400.000 Granet à Bourget, 3 avr. 1865.

68 Ibid., RCD 107 Bourget à Granet, 23 fév. 1865.

69 ASSM, Mémoire Villeneuve, 15 déc. 1864.

on the dispute and its possible solution. He rejected Bourget's claims to oversee the Sulpicians' internal organization. The bishop seemed to forget that the Seminary was dependent on the mother-house in Paris. However, his desire to invest the pastor of Notre Dame was legitimate. On dismemberment, Jacobini tried to forge a path between the Seminary and the bishop. Notre Dame should be reduced to a more manageable size. The residences which already accomodated Sulpician curates would be turned into vicariates administered by the Seminary, but their staff would be appointed by the bishop. This plan, Jacobini hoped, would avoid the complications of dismemberment: debt, mixed population, and the administration of Sulpician property outside the reduced parish.⁷⁰

The Propaganda, however, was leery of imposing a settlement. In a general congregation held on September 28, the Cardinals decided to try to reach a consensus with the parties. They named a commission composed of the Prefect, Barnabò, Reisach, and Caterini to preside over conciliation between Bourget and Caval, the Superior General from Paris. Barnabò set the tone of proceedings in a letter to Bourget. He declared that the bishop's demands conformed with canon law, but emphasized the need for a compromise.⁷¹

After a month of intensive negotiations, the talks appeared to break down on the issue of who could revoke the pastor of Notre Dame, the bishop or the Superior.

70 APFR, Acta (sept. 1865) Voto Jacobini, f. 581-82.

71 ACAM 901.058, Bourget à N. Lavallée, 3 oct. 1865.

Bourget wanted either to do so. Caval opted for the Superior alone and once again threatened to withdraw his community from Montreal should Rome decide otherwise. However, Pius IX personally intervened and gently persuaded him against such an ill-considered action.⁷² The last obstacle was removed, paving the way for a pontifical decree.

Bourget was confident of the outcome. The Propaganda, he believed, would maintain all his episcopal rights, offering the Seminary only those concessions which he himself proposed. The only uncertain point was how dismemberment would be executed.

Les procureurs du Séminaire ici paraissent faire un mystère de cette opération, en disant tantôt qu'elle doit se faire, et tantôt que la paroisse doit demeurer en son entier, sous la conduite du Séminaire, au moyen d'Eglises Annexes.⁷³

A few days later, the bishop announced that the decree seemed to favor him on almost all points. This included dismemberment which would be modified, however, by certain provisions of canon law.⁷⁴

The Sulpicians were not as hopeful about the prospects. Cardinal Villecourt, one of their protectors in Rome, complained bitterly to the Pope about Cardinal Barnabò who apparently accused St-Sulpice of Jansenism.⁷⁵ Villecourt

72 Léon Pouliot, "Il y a cent ans: le démembrement de la paroisse de Notre Dame", RHAF (déc. 1965) 350-383.

73 ACAM, 901.058, Bourget à Paré, 30 oct. 1865.

74 Ibid., 901.058 Bourget à Truteau, 14 nov. 1865.

75 APFR, SC 1862-65, Villecourt à Pie IX, 6 nov. 1865.

blamed Barnabò and Capalti, his Secretary, for being unduly harsh with St-Sulpice. As for Bourget, he plainly lacked judgement. Rome could not subject to canon law a community which had done so much for Montreal.⁷⁶

The pontifical decree of December 22, 1865 reflected the compromise reached in October and November. On the one hand, the Propaganda recognized St-Sulpice's internal autonomy. This included the unobstructed recruitment and movement of priests, the free disposal of property, the Sulpicians' complete dependence on their Superior.

On the other, the Cardinals encouraged Bourget to divide Notre Dame into more distinct parishes. In opting for this solution, they discarded Jacobini's proposal to establish vicariates. Notre Dame received the title of "mother-church" and would have a territory and population befitting this honor. The Cardinals entrusted its cure to the Sulpician community as a whole, rather than to the Superior. This meant that the latter no longer could be the pastor. When erecting new parishes, the bishop was instructed to offer them first to the Seminary and to organize them around the existing annexes. The Sulpician pastors as well as the missionaries at the Lake of Two Mountains reserve would be appointed by the Superior, approved by the bishop, and could be removed by either. Finally, Bourget's jurisdiction would encompass the cure of souls, the administration of the sacraments and parish

⁷⁶ APFR, SC 1862-65, Villecourt à Barnabò, 24 nov. 1865.

property.⁷⁷

The Minutante, or official who prepared a resumé of this case for the Cardinals, had serious doubts about the durability of the agreement. Caval's menace that the Sulpicians would relinquish their work in Montreal, he feared, would eventually be realized.

... la diffidenza che si si mostrano a vicenda le parti durante le trattative di quest'affare, e la tenacità dei loro caratteri fa molto temere che non abbiano a verificarsi più o meno tardi le sinistre previsioni del Sig. Caval.⁷⁸

Judging from a letter which Villecourt addressed to Cardinal Barnabò, the Sulpicians reacted to the pontifical decree with shock and despair. Caval threatened to resign. The Propaganda, the Superior-General complained, treated his priests as if they were suspect. He was astonished that the Cardinals resorted to a formal decree. Such a coercive action was not propitious for preserving a spirit of compromise and understanding. Moreover, the papal document tied the Sulpicians to the bishop's every whim. The feeling that Rome unjustly condemned the Seminary permeated Villecourt's letter.

* * *

Throughout these three years, Bourget argued from a

77 APFR, Acta(déc. 1865) ff. 745.

78 Ibid., Acta (déc. 1865) ff. 750. "... the mutual mistrust which the parties showed during the proceedings and their stubbornness lead me to fear that Mr. Caval's ominous predictions will sooner or later be realized."

position of strength. He was on the offensive and presented his case with clarity and logic. He possessed a greater historical awareness than the Sulpicians and was better able to place situations in their proper perspective.

One cannot but agree with his assessment of dismemberment. It would have been sheer folly to tie the cure of an expanding city to the problematic factor of Sulpician recruitment. The future absolutely condemned the status quo to obsolescence. Certainly the Sulpicians had kept abreast with the rapid population growth, but they were aided by the Oblates and Jesuits whose presence nonetheless irritated them. In any case, Bourget was thinking of a different form of ministry, with a preventative rather than curative orientation.

He was more sensitive to the needs of the suburban populace. Notre Dame was convenient to the wealthier classes most of whom lived in the center and possessed independent means of transportation. However, the poorer population which inhabited the eastern and western periphery of Montreal, were financially and physically burdened. Funerals were only held at the parish church. Baptisms and weddings were also celebrated at St-Patrick and St-Enfant Jésus, but these annexes were close to Notre Dame, and at Notre Dame de Grâce, which was far from St-Henri and Pointe St-Charles.

From the beginning, the Sulpicians found themselves on the defensive. Their arguments too were logical. But, their logic was hermetic. One could appreciate it only by

accepting all Sulpician premises. They opposed dismemberment because it would cause their community to disintegrate. Thus, they refused to admit the possibility of a contradiction between Notre Dame's integrity and their life as a community. Similarly, no one contested that their privileges were recognized legitimately, that their administration had produced some excellent results, and that there had been little abuse of power. But, conditions were changing. At that point, the Sulpician case foundered. They merely reiterated demands for monopolizing the cure and for their Superior's supremacy. The Seminary failed to come to grips with Bourget's arguments. The bishop was quite right in saying that the existence of impediments to dismemberment depended on St-Sulpice's good will. Clearly, these problems were not unsurmountable, as the Seminary intimated. But, the Sulpician threats boded ill for the new order.

The bishop also successfully established that he should exert greater power over the Seminary. The presence of two virtually equal authorities within the city meant that they worked at cross-purposes in the best of times. Examples of problems such as building a church in Faubourg Québec, illustrated this point well. Moreover, despite Baile's assertions to the contrary, the lack of information about which Bourget complained so bitterly was a telling argument against the status quo. Unless Rome confirmed the Seminary's dependence on the bishop, these slip-ups would continue.

St-Sulpice jealously guarded their autonomy with the

same internal logic. They justified customs and usages because time or authority had sanctioned them. They distrusted the bishop, preferring to deal directly with Rome. Sulpician briefs were not communicated to Bourget before being sent to the Propaganda. But, their request that Rome itself set the boundaries of Notre Dame revealed the extent of this lack of confidence. Bourget's contention that the Seminary attempted to be independent of hierarchical authority was no mere illusion.

What would be the extent of the bishop's power over the Sulpician community? Should it include the Seminary's property and the movement of priests between France and Canada? Bourget considered canon law to be the only strong safeguard against arbitrary rule. He was theoretically correct when he used it to define the relationship between the community of secular priests and their bishop. He also showed himself to be a shrewd negotiator. Moreover, Bourget shared in the spirit of his time. A very defined and powerful movement pushed to centralize authority at every level within the Church. The definition of papal infallibility was only a more obvious example of this trend. Were Bourget's demands however realistic? Could he expect to treat the Sulpician community, the former seigneurs of Montreal, like any other secular priest of his diocese? Rome certainly did not think so and its judgement in retrospect appears quite sober.

The Propaganda was very careful not to alienate either

the bishop or the Seminary which had rendered the Church inestimable services in Montreal. Therein lay its dilemma. The Congregation believed that it could some how induce the parties to an accord, even though the Minutante himself perceived their mutual distrust. The pontifical decree accurately mirrored an agreement painfully achieved between Caval and Bourget. It was riddled with vague and ambiguous phrases. One cannot help but speculate that a little coercive diplomacy for which Rome was so adept would have prevented the multitude of problems arising from the dispute.

CHAPTER II
MONTREAL WANTS A UNIVERSITY

Between 1862 and 1865, the university question was fraught with complexity, entangled as it was in personal, professional, and regional rivalries. Ten years after Laval's founding, Bourget asked the Holy See for a pontifical charter to establish a Catholic university in his city.

The situation was this. Four major collèges classiques in the Montreal area still were unaffiliated with Laval. The Ecole de Médecine et de Chirurgie did not have degree-granting privileges. Very few students from the metropolitan region attended Laval. Instead they went to McGill where they were exposed to losing their religious and national identity. The picture looked even bleaker to Bourget because these students would become the élite of French Canada.

Laval steadfastly opposed Bourget's demand. The Séminaire de Québec, its governing body, maintained that a second Catholic university in French Canada would ruin Laval. It would also severely compromise the university's goal of raising academic standards in the province. The Séminaire de Québec accused Bourget of betraying his commitments and intimated that he was the tool of a selfish interest group. Opposed to a rival establishment, the university also refused

to affiliate the collèges classiques in the Montreal area.

The controversy went through a number of phases in the early 1860's. Bourget wanted to raise the issue on his visit to Rome in 1862. Pius IX, acting through an intermediary, advised him against it. However, he did permit the bishop to outline the motives for his request to the Propaganda. Accordingly, Bourget and Charles-François Baillargeon, administrator of the Archdiocese of Quebec, presented their respective cases to the Cardinal Prefect. During these talks, the bishop of Montreal acquired new hope for affiliation. By the end of 1862, however, his expectations were shattered. Bourget once again appealed to Rome. Barnabò turned the problem over to the Quebec hierarchy. A number of bishops declared themselves insufficiently informed and so the final decision was postponed. The episcopal meeting held at Trois Rivières in 1864 saw sentiment shifting slowly but perceptibly in Bourget's favor. A deep-seated fear, though, persisted that establishing a Catholic university in Montreal would harm Laval. The episcopacy clung to affiliation as the best expedient and summoned the parties to a conciliation session. Meanwhile, Mgr. Nardi, a papal domestic prelate, urged Bourget to renew his petition in Rome and promised his full support.¹ By March 1865, the Propaganda formally refused the bishop's request.

There were two attempts at conciliation. In November

¹ APFR, Acta (mars 1865) f. 133 Baillargeon à Barnabò, 27 oct. 1864.

1864, Bishop Joseph Larocque met with the rectors of the Montreal-area collèges classiques to determine whether an accord with Laval was possible. Despite the divergent opinions, they concurred on one point: students from Montreal simply would not go to Laval University. When the meeting closed, Larocque announced that conciliation had failed.

The second attempt occurred in Rome, shortly after the Propaganda reached its decision. Bourget pressed the Cardinals to hold Laval responsible for the success of negotiations concerning affiliation. At first, the Congregation appeared receptive. But, faced with the university's staunch opposition, the Cardinals fell back on their earlier decision. Rome gave greater weight to Laval's threat to close its doors, than to the bishop's fears about Protestant education. The Holy See did nothing to bridge the chasm separating the two parties. Bourget found himself in the same position in 1865 as three years earlier: no university, no affiliation. The problems which he raised were left unresolved.

* * *

In part, the university controversy related to the kind of institution founded in 1852 and to its goals. The bare outlines of Laval's beginnings must be sketched to appreciate the arguments which both sides used.² Bourget was the prime mover of the first Catholic university in the Canadas.

2 P. Sylvain, "Les difficiles débuts de l'université Laval", Cahiers des Dix. 36, 1971. pp. 212-234.

At the first episcopal council held in 1851, he proposed to create a large decentralized structure with its center at the Séminaire de Québec and with branches all over the province. The hierarchy would have a say in course content and in the hiring and firing of faculty, thereby guaranteeing the institution's Catholic character. Clearly, he intended to establish a provincial university.³

The Séminaire de Québec, however, was reticent to take on this enterprise. In the first place, they feared that rivalry among various collèges classiques and cities would frustrate their efforts. In addition, the Imperial government, aroused by the recent re-establishment of the Catholic hierarchy in Great Britain, would hardly be receptive to a project sponsored by the Quebec bishops.⁴ The Séminaire, therefore, suggested a diocesan university under the Archbishop of Quebec's immediate supervision.

Archbishop Pierre-Flavien Turgeon accepted the proposal and asked Bourget to second his petition to the Holy See. The latter replied that he would, if Turgeon endorsed a similar request for Montreal. The Archbishop assured Bourget that the Séminaire did not intend to monopolize higher education in French Canada and that Montreal could later have its own university.⁵ He also dispatched his coadjutor, Baillargeon, to allay Bourget's fears about

3 Sylvain, 219.

4 APFR, SC 1862-65 Documents relatifs à l'Erection et l'Organisation de l'université Laval. Augustin Côté et Cie. (Québec, 1862). Taschereau à Turgeon, 20 mars 1852.

5 Ibid., Turgeon à Bourget, 27 avr. 1852.

Laval's exclusiveness.

On December 8, 1852, the university charter, which the Séminaire itself drafted, received royal sanction. Laval obtained the exclusive privilege to grant degrees and to affiliate the collèges. Was the university therefore diocesan or provincial? This was the crux of the debate in the 1860's. As to the nature of Laval's goals, all concurred that the university was founded to prevent students from attending Protestant institutions, notably McGill, and to raise academic standards in French Canada. The parties differed on the emphasis accorded to each objective. Bourget concerned himself with the first; Laval stressed the second.

The arguments which Bourget presented to Rome and to his colleagues remained more or less invariable during those three years. He particularly emphasized that the expected affiliation of the Montreal-area institutions had not materialized. In his eyes, this was due to the structure which the Séminaire de Québec imposed on Laval. To argue this point, he called on J. S. Raymond, the Superior of Collège de St-Hyacinthe, who secretly prepared a pithy submission to the hierarchy in 1864. Presented in Bourget's name, it contended that Baillargeon deceived the bishop of Montreal in 1852 by suggesting that the terms of Laval's charter would be so broad as to give the collèges maximum independence. Since religious interests required that all institutions join Laval, raising the academic standards should have been a long-term objective. In the interim,

the university could have drawn up its regulations in consultation with the superiors and bishops.

Des expériences eussent été faites; les constitutions définitives eussent été plus ou moins retardées; mais si l'Université, au lieu de s'asseoir aussitôt d'une manière fixe, eût marché progressivement, elle eût pu se placer peut-être plus haut, et assurément plus solidement de manière à exercer un plus grand empire.⁶

Instead, the Séminaire de Québec attempted to impose its hegemony on all the collèges from the very beginning, while preserving its diocesan character. The Séminaire's directors lacked confidence in the rectors of the other collèges. Herein lay all the misunderstanding. They seemed to consider themselves best qualified to administer the university and the sole protectors of academic excellence. They feared any change in Laval's orientation. Taschereau and his colleagues therefore excluded the other collèges from the university governing council. "... Ils auraient pu pourtant supposer qu'ils auraient trouvé, dans d'autres Collèges, le même zèle pour le maintien de la foi et des moeurs des jeunes gens...."⁷

The brief also echoed complaints of rectors who criticized the examinations for the Bachelor's degree. The Séminaire unilaterally determined the number, length, and contents of these tests and required students to write them in Quebec City under its own supervision. This excessive centralization

6 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire de l'Evêque de Montréal aux évêques réunis aux Trois-Rivières, oct. 1864.

7 Ibid., 901.057 Bourget à Barnabò, 26 mai 1862.

was repugnant to the autonomous collèges and impeded their joining Laval.

The Ecole de Médecine's attempts to affiliate with Laval in 1862 indicated to Bourget that, ten years after the university's founding, the Séminaire remained intractable. The Ecole was willing to modify its curriculum somewhat and to negotiate academic requirements for writing medical exams. The doctors felt, however, that the need to maintain a competitive position with McGill restricted their concessions on curriculum. If the Ecole raised standards to Laval's level, students would seek a less stringent environment. Nevertheless, the Séminaire refused to parley, demanding absolute conformity to its regulations.⁸

Bourget felt that Laval could not blame him for failing to affiliate Montreal-area institutions. He had spared no effort in this regard. In 1852, he issued a pastoral letter encouraging the youth of his diocese to attend Laval. Despite rumblings of opposition, he insisted that the collèges affiliate with the university.⁹ In 1858, he brought together the superiors from the Montreal area to determine for himself the reason for the five-year stalemate. The greatest obstacle proved to be the compulsory qualifying exams for the Bachelor's degree. The rectors proposed that each collège set up its own examination board under episcopal

⁸ ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Beaubien, 8 déc. 1862.

⁹ Ibid., 820.001 Mémoire de Mgr. de Montréal à la S.C. de la Propagande, 18 janv. 1865.

supervision to draw up and administer these tests. The institutions also wanted to grant Bachelor's degrees.¹⁰ Finally, Bourget's letter of May 31, 1862 proved conclusively that he wished to promote an entente with Laval. It renounced the objective of a university and urged the collèges to affiliate with Laval.¹¹ On his return to Montreal, the bishop convinced the Ecole de Médecine to make new overtures for union. When these were rebuffed, Bourget sent another letter to his superiors, encouraging them to affiliate.¹² His conscience therefore was clear.

Students from Montreal, Bourget argued, would not attend Laval despite the urgings of their superiors and the hierarchy. He cited some figures. In twelve years, the university attracted some 61 students from the five major collèges in the Montreal area. Of these, eleven resided in Quebec City. Sixty-one French Canadian Catholics, however, were frequenting McGill University in 1864, most of them in the faculties of medicine and law.¹³ In the same year, sixty-nine students were enrolled at the Ecole de Médecine.¹⁴ How could one explain this phenomenon?

Opportunities were greater and more varied in Montreal.

10 APFR, SOCG (mars 1865), Bourget à la Propagande, 28 mars 1862.

11 Ibid., Acta (mars 1865), Bourget aux Supérieurs des Collèges de son Diocèse, 31 mai 1862.

12 ACAM, 820.001, Mémoire de Bourget à la Propagande, 15 fév. 1865.

13 Ibid., 820.001 Mémoire Bourget, 18 janv. 1865.

14 Ibid., 820.001 H. Peltier à Bourget, 22 janv. 1865.

Many young men who aspired to the liberal professions came from the countryside and tended to be poor. They sought the patronage of wealthy citizens willing to assist students in need. In addition,

Les médecins de Montréal, qui sont en très grand nombre et liés avec les principales familles du diocèse, ont le plus grand intérêt à garder auprès d'eux les Elèves de Médecine dont ils reçoivent beaucoup de services sans être tenus à les rémunérer et dont ils reçoivent des émoluments, pour les leçons qu'ils y donnent.¹⁵

The same held true for lawyers who were only too glad to use young aspirants to the profession as copyists. Laval's regulations, however, required students to live in residence under the watchful eye of the Séminaire. Apart from the financial strain on young men, this requirement deprived them of valuable experience. One also had to recognize that after the stringent discipline in the collèges, students required more freedom.

The environment in which these young men carried on their work also provided a lot of stimulation. Montréal was daily assuming greater importance. "C'est dans cette ville que se concertent toutes les affaires avec l'Europe, et les Etats-Unis du Nord et de l'Ouest."¹⁶ Medical facilities were imposing. Hôtel Dieu, for example, cared for three to four thousand patients per year. As for law, students could follow more diversified cases in the courts of an industrial and commercial centre, the largest in British North America, rather than in Quebec City.

15 AGAM, 901.057 Bourget à Barnabò, 26 mai 1862.

16 Ibid., 820.001 Mémoire Bourget, 18 janv. 1865.

Moreover, Laval's stringent academic requirements dissuaded some students from going to Quebec City. Courses were longer; exams, more numerous; discipline, more severe than at McGill.

The perils of Protestant education was the key-stone of Bourget's case. Of course, it assumed special importance in Rome. Bourget noted in early 1865, "tous ceux que nous avons consultés ici là-dessus sont d'avis qu'il faut surtout insister fortement sur (ce) danger...."¹⁷

Doctor Pierre Beaubien, a man of Bourget's generation and professor at the Ecole de Médecine, articulated this argument well. A key figure in the university controversy during this period, he was born of a prominent landed family in Baie du Febvre and married the seigneur de la Rivière Ouelle's daughter. Beaubien studied medicine in Paris under the noted Dr. Récamier. He subsequently practiced among several religious communities, including the Sulpicians, and also at the Montreal Jail. Two of his children became religious, one son was member of Parliament for Hochelaga. A philanthropist, Beaubien supported many of Bourget's projects and institutions.¹⁸ Dr. E. H. Trudel was Bourget's second man of trust within the Ecole. He was born at Ste. Geneviève de Batiscan in 1821 of a notable family. His father had been the first representative for Champlain County in the Legislative Assembly. He studied medicine

17 ACAM, 901.058 Bourget à Paré, 14 janv. 1865.

18 C. P. Beaubien, Ecrin d'Amour Familial. Arbour et Dupont (Montreal, 1914). J. D. Borthwick, History and Biographical Gazeeter of Montreal to the Year 1892. Lovell (Montreal, 1892).

at McGill and, like Beaubien, served many religious institutions. Trudel held the presidency of both the Canadian Medical and the St-Jean Baptiste societies. An active businessman, he sat on boards of several financial institutions.¹⁹ Bourget only dealt with these two men at the Ecole and occasionally confided in them. They tended to be his spokesmen among their colleagues. Beaubien provided Bourget with arguments, statistics and even a brief to the Propaganda.

The doctor decried the spiritual desert in which the aspiring élite received its education. Even the Ecole de Médecine, he admitted, contained questionable elements whose example produced frightful effects upon the students. At Laval, the teaching staff included protestants and free-masons. But, at McGill, the young constantly moved in an atmosphere saturated with Protestantism and indifference. They were perverted by it. These emerging professionals then set up practice in the countryside and infected the habitants with their pernicious doctrines. "... (Ils) donnent en politique ces hommes qui souvent font notre honte et notre malheur."²⁰ This social ill which was worsening every year had to be remedied. Thirteen more French Canadians were registered at the McGill Medical Faculty in 1862 than in the preceding year.

19 P. E. Trudel, Généalogie de la Famille Trudel (Le). La Famille Trudel(le) Inc., (Montreal, 1955). Borthwick.

20 ACAM, 820.001 Beaubien à Bourget, 8 mai 1862.

... Ils vont commencer leur éducation protestante, vont entendre des principes tout à fait différents de ceux que nous enseigne notre foi ... et notamment dans cette question où il s'agit d'un médecin appelé auprès d'une mère pour lui donner le jour à son enfant, vont apprendre à mettre en pratique la doctrine protestante.²¹

Bourget often complained about the constant exposure which Catholics had with Protestantism. "... Notre société ... souffre déjà tant de ces rapports continuels avec nos frères séparés...."²² His flock daily lived with the errors of one of the most superstitious people in the world, the Americans.²³ Montreal was the British North American citadel of Protestantism, whose strength lay in its wealth, its power, and its fanaticism. The numerous Protestant churches throughout the city showed how money was a mighty weapon of propaganda. He pointed to McGill, the most important educational institution in a city where two-thirds of the population was Catholic. Besides these nefarious influences, the Institut Canadien disseminated subversive doctrines especially to the young through lectures, newspapers, and a library. Bourget appealed to Rome to support Catholic institutions. "L'honneur de la religion y est intéressé. Jamais l'Eglise n'a laissé à l'erreur un empire qu'elle a pu lui arracher."²⁴

21 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Beaubien, 8 déc. 1862.

22 Ibid., 820.001 Bourget à Baillargeon, 5 mars 1862.

23 APFR, SOCG (28 mars 1865), Bourget à Barnabò, 22 oct. 1864.

24 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Bourget, 18 janv. 1865.

The bishop considered these reasons serious enough to request a Catholic university which would be a safeguard for religion and nationality.²⁵ Pierre Beaubien best expressed this thought.

... un semblable établissement nous est absolument nécessaire - pour nous Canadiens Français, notre nationalité est fondée sur notre catholicité et notre catholicité sera aidé (sic) dans son développement par la formation d'une Université Catholique qui se mettra à la tête de notre éducation....²⁶

To help him elaborate the structure of the projected university, Bourget called on Firmin Vignon, Rector of Collège Ste-Marie²⁷ and Dr. Beaubien. The bishop submitted a synthesis of these proposals to his provincial colleagues in 1863. The plan was based on three essential elements: episcopal control, a strong religious orientation, and the autonomy of affiliated institutions.

Beaubien produced the most detailed blueprint which borrowed from the Church's hierarchical structure.

Aussi de toutes les combinaisons propres à empêcher l'effet des passions humaines et à établir un équilibre salubre et conservateur, rien ne peut être plus favorable que d'imiter l'organisation du Concile de Trente pour l'administration des Séminaires.²⁸

25 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Bourget, 18 janv. 1865.

26 Ibid., 820.001 Beaubien à Bourget, 8 mai 1862.

27 For more details of Vignon's plan, see Paul Desjardins, Le Collège Sainte-Marie de Montréal. 2 vols., Collège Sainte-Marie, (Montreal, 1940), pp. 173-175.

28 APFR, SC 1862-65 Mémoire d'un des Professeurs de l'Ecole de Médecine et de Chirurgie de Montréal, p. 27.

The bishop was to head the university. His power would extend to all aspects of its organization: drawing up the constitution, setting the goals for each affiliated college, naming the rector and teaching staff, watching over course content, admitting candidates to final exams, and ratifying degrees.

The university would bear the indelible stamp of religion. Montreal already had all the constituent elements for such an institution. St-Sulpice would organize the theology faculty. The petits et grand collèges would form the Arts and Science faculty. The schools of law and medicine would simply be integrated into the new institution. "L'Université Laval semble particulièrement s'occuper des Laïcs; l'Université catholique de Montréal aurait la part glorieuse et principale des Ecclésiastiques."²⁹

In this project, the affiliated collèges would enjoy a good degree of independence. They would administer their own exams and confer the Bachelor's degree. They would also be represented on the board which approved candidates to higher degrees. How did Beaubien propose to conciliate autonomy and authority, the centrifugal and centripetal tendencies within the university structure? The bishop, he thought, would be the impartial guarantor of the institution's character, ensuring that all collèges were equal but subordinated to the common good.

29 APFR, SC 1862-65 Mémoire d'un des Professeurs, p. 11.

Bourget's plan differed slightly from that of Beaubien. Although the hierarchy was to form the highest echelon of the university, the bishop of Montreal would still control the more immediate administration. Collège Ste-Marie would be the core of the university; the other collèges, its auxiliaries, without losing their autonomy. The schools of medicine and law which were already closely connected to religious authority would expound Catholic principles. "L'élément laïque qui devra dominer exclusivement dans ces deux facultés, ne pourra pas toutefois échapper à la vigilance et à l'action bienfaisante de la religion...."³⁰ As for financing the university, the buildings which were to house the faculties already existed. Tuition fees would pay for professors' salaries in the medical and law schools. The bishop of Montreal, therefore, put forth in 1863 the same basic plan of a provincial university which he proposed in 1851.

The Séminaire de Québec's directors decided that the best line of defence was to counter-attack. They accused Bourget of behaving in a flagrantly contradictory manner and of renegging commitments made when Laval was founded. The bishop had known all along what type of institution they were creating. Nothing was done in secret. From the beginning, they had transmitted their views as well as drafts

³⁰ ACAM, 820.001 Considérations de l'Evêque de Montréal pour l'Erection d'une Université (1863?).

of the university charter to the hierarchy. By adopting this procedure, they had hoped to avoid direct contact with the collèges, which would have entailed endless chaotic and probably fruitless negotiations. If the Séminaire excluded outsiders from the University administration, it was not because of some conspiracy to monopolize higher education, but solely for efficiency.

Comment concilier le progrès rapide de l'Université avec l'obligation de recourir à chaque instant à l'avis de NN.SS. les Evêques et de consulter les supérieurs d'un grand nombre de collèges éloignées les uns des autres.³¹

Laval's charter therefore was similar in all essential aspects to the proposal Bourget advanced in 1851.

Even if fundamental differences did exist between the two projects, the directors argued that the bishop was bound to his commitment of May 14, 1852. At that time, the prelate stated, "la raison qu'il faut s'unir pour donner à une pareille institution toute l'importance qu'elle peut et doit avoir, sera toujours pour moi péremptoire."³² Bourget made this pledge after Baillargeon's mission to Montreal. In 1862, he justified his petition to the Holy See by citing an earlier letter to Archbishop Turgeon in which he requested support for a university in Montreal. However, the later missive clearly took precedence; it was definitive support for Laval.

The bishop's actions in the early 1850's were also an

31 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Taschereau-Horan, 11 fév. 1865.

32 Ibid., 820.001 Mémoire Taschereau-Horan, 11 fév. 1865.

implicit commitment not to thwart Laval's crucial years of growth until the French Canadian population substantially increased. The Séminaire had not presumed at that time to demand a formal commitment from the hierarchy. It would have been insulting. Besides, an unwritten agreement already existed: "Oui, dès le début, l'on s'était expliqué de part et d'autre la difficulté actuelle vient de ce que Mgr. de M(ontréal) a oublié ses propres paroles."³³

The Séminaire alleged that the initial ardor of Laval cooled considerably soon after its founding. The other collèges became passionately jealous of Laval. They prevented their students from going to Quebec City. The bishops themselves did nothing to encourage young men to attend the university.³⁴

Edward Horan, bishop of Kingston and former director of the Séminaire de Québec, and Rector E. A. Taschereau made particularly pointed references to Bourget. Every year students visiting Quebec City from Montreal were greatly impressed with Laval's facilities. How could Horan and Taschereau therefore believe Bourget's assertion that he did all he could to stimulate an active interest in the university? Despite the obstacles, the number of Montreal students attending Laval was increasing. If Bourget put his mind to it, the danger of Protestant education would disappear. Regional rivalry was merely a thinly veiled

³³ ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Taschereau-Horan, 11 fév. 1865.

³⁴ APFR, Acta (mars 1865) Horan à Barnabò, 9 avr. 1862.

excuse for inaction.

Cette rivalité est un fait qu'il faut déplorer sans doute, mais qu'il n'est ni avantageux ni glorieux à la religion de maintenir, au lieu de la combattre, il est sans doute plus expéditif de déclarer une difficulté insoluble, mais ce moyen n'est pas toujours le plus juste ou le plus avantageux.³⁵

Instead of encouraging the collèges to join Laval, Bourget remained passive during the five years of negotiations for affiliation. When in 1858 the bishop finally called a meeting of rectors, the university was not invited. This suggested that he was making himself a spokesman for the grievances of his diocesan collèges. Bourget's actions indicated that he had done nothing to bring either individuals or institutions closer to Laval. "Malheureusement, nous avons à nous plaindre de ce que ce concours a consisté plus en paroles et en promesses qu'en effets."³⁶

The Séminaire regarded affiliation and academic standards as intimately connected. Literary studies were weak in the collèges and teachers, generally unqualified.³⁷ Even Joseph Larocque, by no means an advocate of Laval, decried the situation wherein the petits collèges used young seminarians as professors. Poorly trained teachers, they became poorly educated priests with minimal exposure to theology.³⁸ Horan

35 ACAM, Mémoire Taschereau-Horan, 11 fév. 1865.

36 Ibid., Mémoire Taschereau-Horan, 11 fév. 1865.

37 APFR, Acta(mars 1865) Mémoire Horan à la Propagande, 9 avr. 1862.

38 ACAM, 295.103, Larocque à Bourget, 21 juil. 1863.

believed that it was up to the clergy to set rigorous academic criteria, otherwise the laity would take up the challenge with all the dangers which that would entail.³⁹ Low standards also contributed to the glut of French Canadian professionals. A university having stringent academic requirements would diminish the number of under-qualified doctors and lawyers and promote greater social diversity.⁴⁰ Affiliation under any terms, therefore, would defeat Laval's raison d'être.

The Séminaire's directors refuted Bourget's contention that the rebuff to the Ecole de Médecine illustrated their intransigence. In the first place, the Holy See neither suggested nor ordered affiliation in 1862.⁴¹ In addition, the Ecole had demanded immediate union despite its lower standards. Montreal's medical programme required two six-month academic sessions. Candidates then waited two years before writing provincial exams. Laval, on the other hand, demanded the Bachelor's degree as a prerequisite to medical studies which comprised four nine-month sessions.

The Ecole's request was also tantamount to creating a new university. Claiming to speak for the other diocesan collèges, the Montreal doctors wanted to create a second university council under the bishop of Montreal.⁴² No mere

39 APFR, Acta (mars 1865) Mémoire Horan, 9 avr. 1862.

40 ACAM, 820.001 Bourget à Baillargeon, 5 mars 1862.

41 Ibid., Mémoire Taschereau-Horan, 11 fév. 1865.

42 APFR, SC 1862-65 Mémoire du Séminaire de Québec aux Evêques du Québec réunis à Trois Rivières, oct. 1864.

caprice dictated the Séminaire's response in this matter. The directors were defending high educational standards and their institution's integrity. Laval, they maintained, did not need the Ecole de Médecine to become a provincial establishment. Both government and the public already recognized the university's character.⁴³ Students from across the province had access to Laval which offered them all the courses they desired. The directors wished to avoid the appearance of arrogance, however, and reiterated their readiness to implement any plan of affiliation acceptable to the bishops and the majority of the collèges.⁴⁴

Pursuing the offensive, Horan and Taschereau accused Bourget of trying slyly and deliberately to circumvent the Holy See's pronouncement in 1862. Of course, the Séminaire and the bishop had diametrically opposed views of what transpired in Rome that year. According to Bourget, the Pope merely requested him not to ask for a Catholic university. The proceedings which followed were a mere formality, an opportunity for Bourget to air his views on the university question. Neither Pius IX's request nor the subsequent negotiations with Barnabò constituted a formal Roman sentence. Indeed, the Pope himself promised Bourget to reconsider the case.⁴⁵

Taschereau and Horan challenged this interpretation. If the bishop really had been convinced about the dangers of

43 APFR, SC 1862-65 Mémoire du Séminaire de Québec, oct. 1864.

44 Ibid., Acta (mars, 1865) Mémoire Taschereau-Horan, 21 fév. 1865.

45 ACAM, 901.058 Bourget à Paré, 11 mars 1865.

Protestant education, would he have regarded a mere request from the Pope as "un ordre du ciel"? "...L'usage que Monseigneur de Montréal fait de ce motif pour demander un nouveau jugement serait-il donc une preuve que, voyant sa cause peu favorablement accueillie en 1862, il a voulu se réserver un moyen de revenir contre cette décision."⁴⁶ Bourget had obviously set his mind on a university and intended to pursue any tactic to reach this objective.

The Séminaire contended that the Propaganda's decision was indeed a formal judgement which rejected a Montreal university and any equivalent proposal. Even if Barnabò had not acted as judge during these proceedings, but merely as an arbiter, his judgement was still final. The negotiations had all the characteristics of a legally binding procedure. The parties freely chose Barnabò; they appeared before him in person; they accepted his decision during a formal session; the judgement was confirmed by an official document. Roma locuta est, causa finita est.

Laval's delegates also accused Bourget of making himself the blind instrument of suspect interests, particularly of the Ecole de Médecine. The doctors were pushing Bourget because they wanted to increase enrolment and thereby, their profits.⁴⁷ Taschereau and Horan doubted that the Ecole was a Catholic institution and imputed sinister strategies to its staff.

46 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Horan-Taschereau, 11 fév. 1865.

47 APFR, Acta (mars 1865) Horan à Barnabò, 9 avr. 1862.

Que les universités protestantes cherchent à s'affilier les Ecoles de droit et de médecine, cela se conçoit; mais nous ne comprenions guère que ces écoles se laissent prendre au piège. Toutes leurs protestations de catholicité ne seraient-elles qu'un prétexte pour se concilier l'influence de l'Evêque afin d'obtenir une charte, des souscriptions abondantes et des élèves pour ensuite se séparer du clergé? Tôt ou tard, les largesses serviront de prétexte aux laïcs pour éliminer l'Evêque et le clergé.... On aura commencé par détruire l'université Laval qui, par sa constitution essentiellement ecclésiastique, ne peut jamais être exposé à ce danger.⁴⁸

Rumors also suggested that the Jesuits were behind Bourget's initiatives. They apparently hoped to recover properties lost after the Conquest by establishing a university with the bishop's support.⁴⁹

Apart from these offensive tactics, the Séminaire's directors argued that a Catholic university in Montreal would ruin Laval.⁵⁰ The Séminaire had made tremendous human and financial sacrifices to found the university. The three large buildings on campus cost some \$200,000. Many professors had to be sent abroad to become more specialized. The Séminaire's library was expanded; laboratories and museums were set up. Bourget's idea that two Catholic universities would nobly compete for the greater glory of religion was simply naive. "La noble émulation ... finira par tout réduire au néant, car chacune voudra compter plus d'élèves, plus de docteurs et pour cela se montrer plus courte et plus facile."⁵¹

48 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Horan-Taschereau, 11 fév. 1865.

49 Ibid., 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 9 janv. 1865.

50 APFR, Acta (mars 1865) Baillargeon à Barnabò, 18 mai 1862.

51 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Horan-Taschereau, 11 fév. 1865.

The Séminaire believed that a simple solution existed to this dilemma. Bourget should use the money intended to found a university for scholarships which would encourage students from Montreal to go to Quebec City.⁵²

The hierarchy's decision in October 1864 to settle the question by arbitration seemed to shake the pro-Laval camp. Horan wrote to Barnabò: "... on a assez fait pour inspirer de graves craintes aux amis de la haute éducation au Canada."⁵³

Bourget wanted Laval to allow the collèges and the Ecole de Médecine to grant Bachelor's degrees. These institutions would in turn provide guarantees regarding academic standards. In this way, students could be induced to obtain higher degrees at Laval, having pursued their undergraduate studies in the Catholic establishments of Montreal. "Or ... qui ne voit que le but du Séminaire de Québec, en faisant ces immenses sacrifices qu'il a faits, serait atteint sous tous les rapports, en adoptant ces moyens de conciliation, ou autres meilleurs."⁵⁴ Laval, however, refused to modify its position.

The meeting of superiors from the Montreal area, held at St-Hyacinthe in early November, showed that entente was impossible. The participants concurred that affiliation would not predispose Montreal students to attend Laval.

52 APFR, Acta (mars, 1865) Mémoire Horan, 9 avr. 1862.

53 Ibid., SC 1862-65 Horan à Barnabò, 4 nov. 1864.

54 ACAM, RLB 14 Bourget à J. Larocque, 20 oct. 1864.

They disagreed about the dangers of Protestant education. The Sulpician Granet maintained that McGill did not engage in active proselytizing and that, on the whole, its students behaved respectably. Drs. Trudel and Beaubien insisted that McGill's principles were opposed to Catholic theology and that its environment was perverse. Generally the delegates agreed with I. S. Désaulniers from the Collège de St-Hyacinthe, who cited Pius IX's statement that Catholics had to secure by all means possible an orthodox education.

Larocque asked the representatives whether a Montreal university would solve the problem of Protestant education. Granet thought not. Raymond believed that Catholics attended McGill only to obtain degrees. Parents undoubtedly would send their children to a Catholic university once it was established. Its high academic standards would be an inducement, rather than an impediment. Désaulniers seconded his superior. It was unnecessary, he thought, to lower academic requirements in order to be competitive with McGill. Students attended the Ecole de Médecine, even though the Protestant university offered them greater advantages including a degree. They would surely flock to a Catholic university.

Two camps emerged from this meeting. The pro-Laval group included the Séminaire de Ste-Thérèse, already affiliated with the university, and the Sulpician Collège de Montréal, which intended to affiliate. The other faction, composed of three collèges, Ste-Marie, St-Hyacinthe,

l'Assomption, and the schools of law and medicine gave priority to a Montreal university over affiliation.⁵⁵

Larocque was satisfied with the meeting, but announced that conciliation had failed because the institutions did not want it. The bishop of St-Hyacinthe forwarded a report to all his colleagues. At that point, however, communications broke down.

The episcopal meeting at Trois Rivières had not specified how the bishops could express their opinion on Larocque's report. They did not know whether to forward their views to the Archbishop of Quebec or to the bishop of St-Hyacinthe. Consequently, the question was left hanging.

Attention then shifted to Rome. The Propaganda's refusal to grant a second Catholic university proved to be difficult medicine for Bourget to swallow. "L'humiliation qui va m'en revenir achèvera ... de guérir mon orgueil"⁵⁶ Paré reported on reaction at home: "... Les citoyens de Montréal, même les plus religieux, sont exaspérés par une pareille décision."⁵⁷ A rumor was making the rounds that the Ecole de Médecine soon would affiliate with McGill.⁵⁸

Amidst all this gloom, a glimmer of hope appeared. Although the Congregation refused a second Catholic university, the Cardinals seemed to want a settlement

55 ACAM, 820.001 Rapport de l'Assemblée des Supérieurs tenue à St-Hyacinthe, 7 nov. 1864.

56 Ibid., 901.058 Bourget à Truteau, 28 avr. 1865.

57 Ibid., 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 28 avr. 1865.

58 Ibid., 901.058 Bourget à Truteau, 5 avr. 1865.

meeting Montreal's needs. Bourget of course was wary of Taschereau and Horan's fresh promises to do all they could in that regard. He waited for the Holy See to publish its decision before trying to secure major concessions from Laval.⁵⁹

In May, he asked the Congregation to decree that students could write their exams and obtain university degrees in Montreal, provided that the diocesan collèges accepted Laval's requirements for affiliation.⁶⁰ The parties themselves would then work out the details. But, responsibility for the success of negotiations, would lie entirely with Laval. Since the university set the final exams, there existed adequate guarantees for maintaining standards.⁶¹ The bishop of Montreal thought this to be the best expedient. His city would be blessed with all the advantages of a university without any of the heavy costs.⁶²

The Propaganda seemed receptive to Bourget's initiative. Capalti informed him that the Cardinals were formulating the second part of the decision which in substance stated:

... Il est expédient que l'Université Laval use de tous les privilèges, que lui donne sa Charte, pour favoriser les étudiants de Montréal, afin d'empêcher qu'ils ne s'unissent à l'Université protestante.⁶³

59 ACAM, 901.058 Bourget à Paré, 26 avr. 1865.

60 Ibid, RCD 107 Bourget à A. Capalti, 3 mai 1865.

61 APFR, SC 1862-65, Bourget à Barnabò, 31 mai 1865.

62 ACAM, 901.058 Bourget à Paré, 24 mai 1865.

63 Ibid., 901.058 Bourget à Paré, 24 mai 1865.

The onus was with Laval. A delighted Bourget asked Paré to urge the Ecole de Médecine not to be unyielding with the university. A few days later, Barnabò transmitted the bishop's proposals for Laval's consideration. Apparently, the Prefect also assured Bourget "que si l'on n'y était pas raisonnable, la S.C. nous donnerait toute liberté de sauver notre jeunesse, au moyen d'une Université que nous établirions pour nous."⁶⁴

The winds which buoyed up Bourget's hopes suddenly died down. Baillargeon, Horan, and Taschereau dispatched stiffly worded letters to the Propaganda. Baillargeon again underlined Bourget's refractoriness.

Sera-t-il donc toujours permis à ce prélat de ne tenir aucun compte des sentences prononcées par l'Autorité Pontificale? Ne convient-il pas de l'obliger enfin à donner à son clergé, à son peuple et à toute la Province de Québec, témoins de sa résistance, l'exemple d'une vraie soumission aux décisions de cette même autorité?⁶⁵

The Roman Congregation, he insisted, had decided the issue against Montreal. Had not the Cardinals considered greatly exaggerated Bourget's argument that Montreal students would not go to Quebec City?⁶⁶ Laval's rector interpreted the Roman sentence to mean that the Holy See would not permit a second Catholic university even if Laval refused to set up an annex in Montreal.⁶⁷ "Avec un million de catholiques,

64 ACAM, 901.058 Bourget à Truteau, 9 juin 1865.

65 APFR, SC 1862-65, Baillargeon à Barnabò, 20 juin 1865.

66 Ibid., SC 1862-65 Taschereau à Barnabò, 26 juin 1865.
Horan à Barnabò, 28 juin 1865.

67 Ibid., SC 1862-65 Taschereau à Barnabò, 26 juin 1865.

(est-il) expédient de multiplier à l'infini les universités catholiques...."⁶⁸ Rome, he warned, would lose much credibility by altering its decision.

Before this concerted assault, the Propaganda capitulated. The Prefect asked Bourget to desist. The latter was surprised at Rome's sudden hardening. A few months before, the bishop noted, Barnabò was encouraging him to find a solution to this problem. Did the Prefect not ask him to return a copy of the final sentence, claiming that it did not adequately render the Propaganda's ideas? Did this not indicate the Congregation's willingness to reach an accommodation between Laval and Montreal?⁶⁹

The Propaganda's position remained unclear, if not ambivalent. A few days after Barnabò asked Bourget to submit, Norbert Lavallée, a priest from Montreal, reported to his bishop: "Je dirai à votre Grandeur un moyen de revenir contre le décret de la Congregation, moyen que m'a suggéré son Eminence (Barnabò). Ce moyen toutefois ne pourra être employé que lorsque le mal sera bien avancé."⁷⁰ The Cardinal's position was hardly conducive to ending the dispute. Barnabò seemed anxious to alienate neither party.

* * *

In the university question, as with dismemberment, the

68 APFR, SC 1862-65 Taschereau à Barnabò, 7 juil. 1865.

69 Ibid., SC 1862-65 Bourget à Barnabò, 11 sept. 1865.

70 ACAM, 421.088 Lavallée à Bourget, 12 sept. 1865.

bishop of Montreal wanted to implant Catholic institutions throughout his ever-expanding city. In his mind these establishments proved the viability of a culture², daily confronted by the titanic achievements of a rival culture. The innumerable and opulent Protestant churches; the flourishing and richly endowed educational institutions; an aggressive, or even a quietly condescending press; these were symbols of power and wealth which had to be countered in order to impress upon French Canadian Catholics the need to remain faithful to their roots. How much more pressing was a Catholic university in a city where an important segment of the professional class frequented McGill or the Institut Canadien. In an elitist society, this group was the mainstay of cultural identity. Bourget had already witnessed the Rouge's defection from the Church and many political leaders' religious indifference. To stem this hemorrhage was imperative. In his eyes, Laval was not performing this function effectively.

By choosing an offensive strategy, the Séminaire de Québec was undoubtedly very clever, and indeed successful. However, this tactic emphasized their opposition to Bourget's demands, instead of dealing with his arguments. In 1852, the prelate hoped that the university would affiliate his collèges. How then could the Séminaire see an irrevocable commitment to Laval in his letter of May 14, 1852? Rather his missive of May 4, requesting Turgeon's support for a

* Bourget would have used the term "religion".

university in Montreal, was a surer indication of how the bishop perceived this question: Montreal had the same right as Quebec City to a diocesan university.

In arguing that Bourget failed to encourage Laval, the Séminaire de Québec suggested that he should have made himself the blind instrument of university policy. The bishop of Montreal, however, could hardly be expected to abandon the institutions of his region. The Collège de Montréal was founded in 1767, St-Hyacinthe, in 1812. The Ecole de Médecine was older than the institution which preceded Laval's faculty of medicine. Bourget himself requested the Jesuits to establish a collège in Montreal. He would have been hard-pressed to impose the Séminaire's conditions for affiliation on these institutions. The bishop would have been open to accusations of betraying these establishments at a time when regional rivalries ran very deep. Yet, from the beginning, the Séminaire de Québec dealt directly with the bishops, expecting them to act as the agents for Laval.

Besides this, Bourget considered the conditions for affiliation unduly severe. Three collèges, Montréal, St-Hyacinthe and Ste-Marie all had well-established and a fairly good curriculum. Laval's objective of raising academic standards could not conceivably apply to these institutions. When Horan decried the poor quality of literary studies, when Larocque complained about the use of unqualified seminarians as teachers, they were both referring to the petits collèges. But, Bourget was not asking Laval

to affiliate these. The bishop of Montreal believed that the concessions which the older and well-known collèges demanded were not unreasonable and that the university could grant them under the wide provisions of its charter.

The Séminaire de Québec held that the Ecole de Médecine's standards were low. The Ecole did not require completion of the collège classique for admission. But, according to Dr. Hector Peltier's statistics, almost three-quarters of the students registered had completed the penultimate year of their classical education, while half finished the programme. The secretary of the Ecole also noted that, although legislation required a minimum of two years' academic work, most students followed a four-year course as at Laval.⁷¹

The Ecole's regulations were not as stiff as Laval's, but the academic background and medical studies of students at both establishments were more or less on par. This is especially true because Laval also allowed non-registered students to audit courses at the medical faculty, giving them the minimum legal requirements to write the provincial qualifying exam.⁷²

The Séminaire also assailed Bourget for being the dupe of suspect interest groups. Desjardins successfully disposed of the hypothesis that the Jesuits were lurking behind the bishop of Montreal. He showed that it was

71 ACAM, 820.001 Peltier à Bourget, 22 janv. 1865.

72 C. M. Boissonault, Histoire de la Faculté de Médecine de Laval. (Québec, 1953), 187.

rather Bourget who encouraged the Order to help him establish a second Catholic university.⁷³ The Ecole de Médecine was not a homogeneous institution. Two professors, Drs. Coderre and Bibaud, belonged to the Institut Canadien. Dr. Peltier, a graduate of Edinburgh, was reputed to be a free thinker. However, Bourget worked exclusively with Drs. Trudel and Beaubien, both of whom had sound Catholic credentials.

The bishop of Montreal acted independently of the Ecole de Médecine when he believed that the cause warranted it. Bourget withdrew his support from the Ecole in 1861 when Dr. Bibaud was elected president. Considering the extent of episcopal patronage, this was no empty gesture. In May 1865, without consulting the Ecole, Bourget promised the Propaganda, to accept Laval's academic requirements if degrees could be granted in Montreal.⁷⁴ One wonders how the Ecole would have reacted to such a commitment. Throughout these years, he solicited help from different groups, but always remained at the helm. Could a man of his tenacity and singleness of purpose become the unseeing instrument of forces opposed to his goals?

The Séminaire de Québec also feared the competition from a second Catholic establishment. Bourget repeatedly pointed out that a university in Montreal could not draw away from Laval students who did not go there in the first

73 Desjardins, 191-194.

74 ACAM, 901.058 Bourget à Paré, 24 mai 1865.

place. The Séminaire de Québec's heavy deficit would have to be absorbed by students most likely to frequent Laval. Bourget did not expect that the two institutions would be in economic competition.

What if one university set lower academic standards, would this not provoke a rush on the establishment granting degrees more easily? The bishop of Montreal believed not because regional rivalry ran so deeply in Canada East that students would attend their own local universities, despite more favorable conditions elsewhere. Indeed to Bourget, this fact was so obvious, it was almost axiomatic.

On the university question, as with dismemberment, Bourget presented a perfectly logical case. Conventions agreed upon at the outset had not borne fruit; a trial period of some ten years proved that Laval could not draw students from the Montreal area; McGill with its well-established faculties was seducing greater numbers of young French Catholics; a solution had to be found to this critical situation. The bishop obtained the active support of Collège Ste-Marie, Collège de St-Hyacinthe, and the Ecole de Médecine, and, therefore, possessed the constituent elements of a university.

On the other hand, the Séminaire de Québec argued from a position of fear and suspicion. In fact, Bourget's failure to deal with these deep-seated feelings contributed significantly to his lack of success. Laval was apprehensive about competition. The belief that somehow Bourget

could do more to encourage the university, the hope that in some way students from the region of Montreal would be persuaded to come to Quebec City, imbued the Séminaire's briefs. They suspected in turn the bishop, the Jesuits, and the Ecole de Médecine, and imputed sinister motives to them.

In the intellectual history of French Canada, a dichotomy existed between the Montreal and Quebec minds. The education which members of the Séminaire de Québec received in Europe accentuated this disparity. They were set far apart from the rest of the clergy which possessed very little formal intellection. In such a context, suspicion and misunderstanding were easily generated. Educated men were by no means immune from such emotions. Arguments like those about raising academic standards became all the more passionate.

One final factor stymied the university question; the lack of follow-up mechanisms to negotiations held between 1862 and 1865. The episcopal conference at Trois-Rivières unfortunately did not define the manner in which the bishops' opinions should be collected after the conciliation proceedings at St-Hyacinthe.

Equally deplorable was that Rome displayed a great deal of inconsistency in attempting to resolve the issue. If the Propaganda recognized the seriousness of Bourget's contentions, why did it not supervise either directly or indirectly conciliation proceedings in 1862? Why did it

allow Taschereau and Horan to leave Rome in April 1865, effectively destroying Bourget's efforts to extort concessions in subsequent months? Why did the Congregation not demand a report from the provincial council of bishops in early 1865 before receiving Bourget's petition for a university? On the one hand, Rome fanned the prelate's aspirations; on the other, it did not want to offend Laval. Such ambivalence severely aggravated the problem.

CHAPTER III
CARTIER HALTS DISMEMBERMENT

The pontifical decree did not still the controversy between Bourget and the Sulpicians. Instead, the situation deteriorated as the proportions of the disagreement became greatly magnified. A host of other parties took up position beside the principals. These not only included bishops, but the laity, which meant lawyers, politicians and their press. But, there was also a qualitative change in the issues themselves. They had ramifications far surpassing a simple question of dismemberment and came to involve relations between Church and State. Thus, a seemingly pedestrian matter of ecclesiastical government affecting one diocese acquired a much greater significance, transcending the purely spiritual realm and implicating civil and religious leaders in Canada East.

Bourget believed that the Roman decree authorized him to institute fairly sweeping changes in Notre Dame parish. Quite typically, he wasted no time in implementing them. He proceeded with caution, mindful of the Propaganda's admonitions and of the restrictions in the decree and in civil law. The bishop sought to provide Montrealers with maximum spiritual advantages without disturbing the civil status of Notre Dame. Within its boundaries, therefore, he erected ten new canonical parishes between September 1866

and December 1867. He also inaugurated changes in parish administration.

From the outset, the Seminary determined to concede as little as possible of its old privileges. Accordingly, the Sulpicians systematically obstructed the bishop's operations by capitalizing on loopholes in the pontifical decree and especially by adopting an improbable interpretation of civil law. They secured powerful allies to defend their cause and also brought the Fabrique of Notre Dame and the Irish community into the controversy.

Once again, the controversy crossed the Atlantic. The Seminary, the Fabrique, and the Irish presented a common front. Apart from reiterating arguments about the illegality of dismemberment, they contended that Bourget was seriously damaging relations between Church and State and speculated about the dire consequences of his actions.

Bourget retaliated. He dispatched delegates to justify his actions. Although the bishop found himself on the defensive, his representatives attacked. They accused the Seminary of gallicanism, mismanaging the parish, inciting the Irish, and luring the Fabrique into a strictly ecclesiastical affair. They demanded that Rome put an end to Sulpician opposition.

The Propaganda adopted a wait-and-see attitude. Incompetent to adjudicate on conflicting interpretations of civil law, the Cardinals decided to let the events speak for themselves. In so doing, they indirectly encouraged a

controversy already attaining disquieting proportions. A directive either to comply with the decree or to seek a civil decision would have defused a potentially explosive situation. Instead, the case remained in a state of suspended animation, half-way between the realms of Church and State.

* * *

Soon after its publication, the weakness of the Roman decree became very evident. The parties did not agree in the least about what the dismemberment clause meant. It seemed as if conciliation proceedings had never taken place. In mid-April 1866, Bourget asked Alexandre Baile, the new Sulpician Superior, to submit a proposal for dividing the parish.¹ The latter replied:

Si Votre Grandeur jugeait à propos d'autoriser les Directeurs de nos différentes Résidences à faire chacun chez soi, les fonctions curiales... les fidèles auraient ce qu'ils peuvent raisonnablement désirer; mais s'il s'agit d'un démembrement proprement dit, le Séminaire ne voit dans cette question qu'une source de troubles, de dissensions, de difficultés énormes, peut-être insurmontables et il ne saurait proposer aucun plan de division.²

The Fabrique fully endorsed Baile's view. They suggested that the Sulpicians could perform baptisms and weddings in all church-annexes without dismemberment. Legislation already authorized some Montreal churches to hold civil registers. Further amendments could extend

1 ACAM, RLB 15, Bourget à Baile, 13 avr. 1866.

2 APFR, SC Appendice 1867, Baile à Bourget, 17 avr. 1866.

this privilege to the rest. The Fabrique offered to pay the cost of this operation.³

A sense of urgency, however, impelled the bishop to act. Rumors concerning dismemberment flew about the city, generating an atmosphere of uncertainty.⁴ La Minerve was acquainting its readers with the same arguments against division, which the Sulpicians presented in camera to the Propaganda.⁵

The Sulpician Superior revealed parts of the pontifical decree to the Fabrique, which began to make representations to the bishop against dismemberment. Bourget reminded St-Sulpice that such an essentially spiritual matter concerned them alone.⁶ Faced with this incipient opposition, he moved quickly to clarify the situation. On May 23, he published a pastoral letter about the changes to come.

The document nicely delimited the spheres of authority between Church and State. The parish was an essentially ecclesiastical unit established to fulfill the community's spiritual needs. Dismemberment therefore belonged exclusively to the Church. Of course, the State could confer certain privileges upon the parish, like the right to form a legally recognized corporation to administer its property or to compel the whole community to share its financial burdens. But, this did not derogate from the parish's fundamentally spiritual character, nor was State

3 ACAM, 901.136 Commentaires des Marguilliers députés de Notre Dame contre la division de la paroisse, 25 mai 1866.

4 Ibid., RLB 15 Bourget à Baile, 26 avr. 1866.

5 Ibid., RLB 15 Bourget à Baile, 18 mai 1866.

6 Ibid., RLB 15 Paré à T. Ryan, 19 mai 1866.

recognition necessary for its functioning. Bourget cited in his mandement a Superior Court judgement of 1852 to prove that civil authority corroborated this interpretation. Church and State possessed distinct and autonomous jurisdictions because their objectives were totally different.

Since dismemberment was strictly a canonical act, it would have no civil repercussions. The new parishes would maintain their legally recognized status as annexes of Notre Dame. There would still be one fabrique within the civil parish.⁷

The opposition to dismemberment seemed to come from diverse groups: the Seminary, the Fabrique, and the Irish. In fact, the last two were controlled by St-Sulpice. The Sulpician presence in the Church Council had always been more than obvious with the Superior presiding all meetings and the Sulpician attorney managing the passive debt. Moreover, the Fabrique was in a state of utter financial dependence on the Seminary. As for the Irish, Father Patrick Dowd, a Sulpician, exerted extraordinary influence over his community. He counselled the leaders of this opposition component, who were his intimates.

Bourget's antagonists could count on powerful people to support their struggle. Because of its extensive real estate holdings, the Seminary had forged close links with those in authority. It was no accident that G. E. Cartier, Attorney General for Canada East, defended Sulpician legal

⁷ ACAM, 901.137 Lettre pastorale de Mgr. Bourget sur le démembrement de Notre Dame, 23 mai 1866.

interests. The Fabrique was composed of Montreal's Catholic élite related by political and business interests to those in government. J. Ubalde Beaudry, a prominent lawyer whom Cartier had appointed to the committee codefying civil law, was the Fabrique's legal counsel. The leaders of the Irish opposition included Thomas Ryan, a wealthy businessman, an eminent member of the Church Council, and future Senator, as well as D'Arcy McGee. Although the Conservative Party as such did not participate in the controversy, many of its leading lights and its Montreal press did actively side with the Seminary. In a society where devout Catholics had severely restricted political options, such combinations occurred more frequently.

Considering themselves spokesmen for popular opinion in the parish, the Fabrique and Irish leaders wanted to second the Sulpician appeal in Rome. Separately they petitioned Baillargeon, acting Metropolitan of the province, against dismemberment. The episcopal administrator officially declined to become their advocate. However, he did forward their briefs to the Propaganda and privately urged Bourget to suspend the decree because of popular opposition. At home, meanwhile, they repeated the same arguments at all public hearings which the bishop called for each dismemberment. La Minerve and the Protestant press in Montreal gave their views wide publicity. This created disquiet among the population.

The Seminary wanted to prove that dismemberment was

illegal, to emphasize the extent of popular opposition, and then to get the Propaganda to suspend the decree. Although the case did not go before a court at this time, Cartier and Beaudry prepared several briefs to support Sulpician legal claims.

St-Sulpice and its allies founded their position on the illegality of dismemberment. They referred to the pontifical decree which emphasized that the bishop's operations conform to the law, "servatis de jure servandis". The State, they argued, only recognized those parishes erected according to canonical and civil procedures.⁸ Two conditions were required before the law sanctioned dismemberment. First, a majority of property owners living within the bounds of the projected parish should petition for its creation. Second, the old parish should be free of debt. Montreal met neither condition.

No one, they maintained, ever asked for dismemberment. At the meetings, no one spoke for it. No one complained about the parish church being inaccessible. Instead, the people expressed their opposition to the new order.⁹ St-Sulpice exploited evidence of popular resistance fully. Early in 1867, some 350 property holders signed petitions against dismemberment in St-Henri and Notre Dame de Grâce.¹⁰

8 ACAM, 901.139 Mémoire de G. E. Cartier aux Marguilliers de Notre Dame sur l'érection de St-Jacques, 19 oct. 1866.

9 Ibid., 901.136 Appel des Curé et Marguilliers de Notre Dame à Mgr. de Tloa, 9 déc. 1866.

10 Ibid., 355.123 Requête des franc-tenanciers de Notre Dame de Grâce à Mgr. Bourget, 20 fév. 1867.
355.124 Requête des franc-tenanciers de St-Henri des Rollands à Mgr. Bourget, 21 fév. 1867.

These documents, obviously inspired by the Fabrique, repeated opposition arguments verbatim. La Minerve published them all and the Seminary forwarded the newspaper issues to Rome.

St-Sulpice especially emphasized Irish opposition. Community leaders vigorously contested Bourget's plan to create a parish around St-Patrick church because the proposed territory contained more French Canadians than Irish. They admitted that Bourget would permit priests attached to St-Patrick to perform curial functions for all the English-speaking Catholics of Montreal. But, this concession could only be temporary. Irish leaders predicted that their community would feel deeply resentful and betrayed, if forced to share their church with French Canadians. Had not the Fabrique built St-Patrick for their exclusive use? Had they not contributed over \$30,000 for church furnishings? Now all would be lost. Their flourishing religious and welfare institutions would be destroyed. The community would disintegrate.¹¹ Feelings were running so high among the Irish, St-Sulpice indicated, that some threatened to have their children baptized in Protestant churches.¹² It was clear, therefore, that dismemberment had no popular support.

11 ACAM, 355.121 Petition to Bishop Baillargeon by the English-speaking Catholics of Montreal, Dec. 2, 1866. 901.145 Protestation de la Congrégation Irlandaise contre le démembrement de St-Patrice, 1867.

12 Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Québec (AAQ), DM. 35 Rousselot à Cazeau, 7 janv. 1867.

As for the debt, the Fabrique claimed that the new order would choke off its sources of revenue. The Church Council would be unable to fulfill long-term financial commitments, nor even to cope with yearly expenditures, amounting to some \$30,000.¹³

Bourget of course never pretended to seek civil recognition for dismemberment. But, Cartier and Beaudry maintained that his canonical procedures were illegal. By declaring that the new parishes would remain, for civil purposes, annexes of Notre Dame, he was intervening in State jurisdiction. Besides, the term "annex" meant something specific in law.¹⁴ It was a place of worship, owned by the parish or Fabrique, for the sole convenience of parishioners, where the pastor or his curate performed certain curial functions.¹⁵ Because the new canonical parishes had their own pastors, a fixed territory and population, civil law no longer considered them annexes of Notre Dame.

To compound this illegality, Cartier and Beaudry asserted that St-Jacques, the first parish to be erected, had never been an annex, merely a chapel, the Seminary's private property. As such, Notre Dame's pastor had no authority to perform curial functions there.¹⁶

... L'érection d'une paroisse purement canonique est une chose impossible dans notre société, ...

13 ACAM, 901.136 Appel des Curé et Marguilliers, 9 déc. 1866.

14 APFR, SC 1866-67 Mémoire J. U. Beaudry avec le concours de G. E. Cartier, déc. 1866.

15 Ibid., SC 1866-67 Mémoire Cartier, 16 oct. 1866.

16 Ibid., SC 1866-67 Cartier à Rousselot, 10 nov. 1866.

on a eu tort de vouloir ainsi se soustraire aux sages dispositions de la loi qui ont adopté le concours des deux puissances dans l'érection des paroisses.¹⁷

Cartier argued that the legal implications of Bourget's actions were awesome. Only in parishes erected canonically and civilly, could the pastor perform functions having legal sanction and record them in State registers.

Une fois le Curé nommé à la desserte d'une paroisse canoniquement et civilement érigée, ses devoirs et ses obligations (civils) ne peuvent être affectés ou diminués par l'Autorité Ecclésiastique, tant qu'il est curé de cette paroisse.¹⁸

The law was so clear on this point that the Legislative Assembly had to introduce a special bill permitting the pastors of Montreal and Quebec City to hold civil registers in church-annexes. The bishop could not, on his own authority, authorize canonical pastors to do so.

This meant that churches like St-Patrick, St-Enfant-Jésus, and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce with civil registers would lose them and those without, would be unable to obtain them. Baptisms, weddings, and burials, performed by a canonical pastor, could be challenged in the courts and declared null. The Sulpician curé could be forced to perform his functions anywhere within Notre Dame's civil precincts, while canonical pastors could be fined for transgressing the law. Cartier also considered that the Fabrique would be committing an

17 APFR, SC 1866-67 Mémoire Beaudry, déc. 1866.

18 ACAM, 901.139 Mémoire Cartier, 19 oct. 1866.

illegal act by providing civil registers to the new parishes.

The opposition had one trump. The prothonotaries of Montreal Superior Court withheld civil registers from canonical pastors. Their letter to A. S. Campion, St-Jacques' pastor, stated:

La paroisse canonique n'a pas d'existence au civil et le curé d'une telle paroisse n'est pas, et ne peut pas être aux yeux de la Loi, fonctionnaire compétent pour tenir les Registres de l'Etat Civil. Voir les articles 128 et 129 du Code Civil.¹⁹

Only Notre Dame's pastor or the curate whom he appointed was authorized to hold civil registers of Notre Dame in the annex of St-Jacques.

The Seminary concluded, "l'intention du St-Siège n'est donc pas que le démembrement se fasse immédiatement, ni de cette manière, puisqu'il se ferait ... en violant toutes les espèces de droit...."²⁰ Bourget insisted on transforming into an immediate order what Rome suggested as a long-term solution.²¹

The bishop continued to dismember Notre Dame despite the obstacles. Canon law stipulated that appeals against his operations were not suspensive. Bourget was also convinced that he had not contravened civil law. He assured Barnabò: "... si je m'étais tant soit peu écarté des règles prescrites, par notre législation, ces Messieurs m'auraient

19 ACAM, 901.138 R. A. R. Hubert, L. J. A. Papineau et J. S. Honey à A. S. Campion, 13 oct. 1866.

20 Ibid., Mémoire de J. A. Baile à A. Truteau sur l'érection de Notre Dame de Grâce, 26 fév. 1867.

21 Ibid., Mémoire Rousselot, 8 nov. 1866.

déjà trainé devant les tribunaux civils. Il en a été question, mais tout s'est réduit à des menaces."²²

In the short term, the bishop sought to circumvent the prothonotaries' decision which he regarded as an arbitrary act, resulting from political influence. Accordingly, he instructed A. S. Campion to request the registers from Superior Court Judge Amable Berthelot whom he considered least amenable to political pressure.²³ Much to the bishop's annoyance St-Jacques' pastor applied to the prothonotaries instead, by citing Beaudry and Cartier's opinion that only court clerks and church wardens could supply these records.²⁴ Thus, the prelate linked his failure to secure civil registers with the Seminary's active resistance to the new order. Once the latter ceased, the former would resolve itself.

In deference to the law, Bourget permitted that baptisms and weddings for parishioners from St-Jacques and St-Patrick be held at Notre Dame.²⁵ He realized that the people would be inconvenienced,²⁶ much less than under the chaotic old order. The prelate insisted that Notre Dame's civil registers clearly indicate for which canonical parish

22 ACAM, RLB 15 Bourget à Barnabò, 21 déc. 1866.

23 Ibid., 901.138 Bourget à Campion, 26 oct. 1866.

24 ASSM, J. U. Beaudry à Rousselot, 30 oct. 1866.

25 ACAM, 901.138 Rousselot à Bourget, 31 oct. 1866.

26 Ibid., RLB 16, Bourget à Barnabò, 15 fév. 1867.

these functions were performed.²⁷ Cartier declared illegal any entry other than that authorized by the law.²⁸ Victor Rousselot, newly-appointed pastor of Notre Dame, expressed great anguish to his bishop, but followed the lawyer's opinion.

Bourget also tried to calm Irish apprehensions. He held the Sulpicians responsible for the fact that Irish and French Canadians shared the same church. The Seminary rejected his suggestion that the Francophone parishioners be accommodated either at the cathedral or the Gesù.

The bishop emphasized that the Irish living outside the parish could still attend their church. This was no mere temporary measure, but a right. St-Patrick would always be the main Irish church. The idea, however, that the entire community could attend St-Patrick forever was obviously extravagant. Already, many flocked to St-Ann's in the west end and St-Bridget's in the east. Bourget insisted that the fear about Irish institutions collapsing was groundless. Nothing prevented non-parishioners from supporting and actively participating in them. Finally, the bishop exhorted the Irish not to become involved in a cause outside their competence.²⁹

Bourget also wanted to reassure the Propaganda that peace reigned throughout his diocese. The Roman

27 ACAM, 901.138 Rousselot à Bourget, 31 oct. 1866.

28 Ibid., 901.139 Cartier à Rousselot, 10 nov. 1866.

29 Ibid., 355.121 Lettre pastorale aux fidèles de St-Patrice, 25 déc. 1866.

Congregation, which received reports of popular opposition to dismemberment, was genuinely alarmed. Bourget produced statements both from the Oblates and Jesuits to deny these allegations. The former admitted that the Irish had been agitated, but noted that Bourget's explanations placated them.³⁰ In a much more truculent tone, Firmin Vignon, Rector of Collège Ste-Marie, asserted that the people remained calm even though the Seminary's agents tried everything to incite them against the bishop. He accused the Sulpicians of condoning the purest Gallican doctrines and of permitting public opinion to judge hierarchical authority. They did not sufficiently protect "les barrières qui séparent les sanctuaires et les laïques."³¹

To argue that dismemberment was legal, Bourget recruited C. S. Cherrier, Edmund Barnard, and Rodolphe Laflamme. The first two played important roles defending the bishop in subsequent years. Cherrier, a man of Bourget's generation, had impressive family credentials, related both to the first bishop of Montreal, Lartigue, and to Louis-Joseph Papineau. After the uprising in 1837, he abandoned active politics and channelled all his energies into legal studies. A meticulous, dedicated, and scholarly advocate, he often defended ecclesiastical interests, notably in the trial concerning the Fabrique chairmanship of Varennes

³⁰ APFR, SC Appendice 1867 RRPP. Antoine, Trudeau, Charpeney et Guérin à Bourget, 5 mars 1867.

³¹ Ibid., SC Appendice 1867 Vignon à Bourget, 4 mars 1867.

parish. Three times Cherrier declined an appointment to the bench, including the chief magistracy of Lower Canada. In the early 1860's, he retired from active practice. Everyone admired his impartiality and erudition. Throughout his life, he was able to frequent both liberal politicians and Bourget's circle without alienating either camp.³²

Edmund Barnard, half Cherrier's age, was born in Trois-Rivières, the son of the city prothonotary. He received Bachelor and Master's degrees from Fordham. He studied law in Trois-Rivières with Judge Polette and in Montreal with John Rose and Judge S. C. Monk. Throughout his professional life, he shunned partisan involvement and acquired a reputation for his vast legal knowledge and detachment. "Mr. Barnard" commented one observer, "is known as one of the most studious, painstaking and successful lawyers in Montreal."³³

Bourget's lawyers preserved his distinction between the spiritual and temporal spheres and proclaimed their mutual independence. The bishop, they argued, was by his office empowered to erect canonical parishes, create annexes, and name pastors. The legislature gave these individuals and institutions legal existence by defining their civil status. One sphere could not infringe upon the other. Cartier and Beaudry's case appeared to deny the powers which the Council of Trent gave to the bishop. It also contradicted "les

³² Borthwick.

³³ G. M. Rose, A Cyclopaedia of Canadian Biography. Rose Publishing Co., (Toronto, 1888), 710.

pactes et les actes qui assurent aux catholiques le libre exercice de leur culte."³⁴

The lawyers maintained that the State recognized the Church's right to erect purely canonical parishes. Bishops had done so from the inception of the colony to the Constitutional Act. In 1791, an ordonnance of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada formally acknowledged this prerogative. That St-Antoine de Chambly never received State sanction was obvious evidence of this contention. Yet, all these parishes kept civil registers as soon as the bishop erected them. When Cartier and Beaudry asserted that civil law denied the existence of canonical parishes, they erred.

Just as the State could not impede the bishop's ecclesiastical operations, so these could not have civil consequences. Nor could they alter existing legal relationships. Their object was purely spiritual. Special legislation (18 Vict., Chap. 163) permitted Notre Dame's pastor or any authorized priest to hold civil registers in church annexes. A canonical decree could not restrict this right. A. A. Dorion, former Attorney-General for Canada East, supported this argument.

(Les Evêques) peuvent bien ériger un territoire en paroisse ou en Cure et y nommer un Curé, mais c'est la loi Civile qui confère à ce Curé le pouvoir de tenir des Registres de l'Etat Civil, et l'autorité ecclésiastique ne peut ni éteindre ni restreindre ce pouvoir.³⁵

³⁴ ACAM, 901.139 Mémoire Cherrier à J. U. Beaudry, 10 janv. 1867.

³⁵ APFR, SC 1866-67 Mémoire Dorion, 1 janv. 1867.

Bourget's decrees specifically reserved the powers which the canonical parish and its pastor could claim from the State. In the eyes of the law, Notre Dame's pastor still enjoyed his prerogative to hold civil registers. He could still be compelled to perform curial functions over the entire civil parish. This did not prevent canonical pastors from having civil registers as authorized priests serving an annex. The canonical parish, for its part, still depended on Notre Dame's Fabrique.³⁶

Cartier and Beaudry objected that a parish church could not be an annex as well. But once again, Bourget's attorneys differentiated temporal and spiritual spheres. As long as there was no contradiction in double status, a church could be both. "Si en érigeant canoniquement et pour des fins spirituelles une Eglise déjà succursale en Eglise paroissiale, l'Evêque l'eût conservé succursale pour les mêmes fins, on pourrait apercevoir une contradiction dans cette opération Episcopale...."³⁷ The double status was not an unusual phenomenon in canon law. A cathedral could also be a parish church, performing both episcopal and curial functions. Notre Dame de Québec illustrated this point well. The onus of evidence lay with Cartier and Beaudry to prove:

... qu'une Eglise ne peut d'après le droit

³⁶ ACAM, 901.136 Mémoire Cherrier, 21 nov. 1866.

³⁷ Ibid., 901.139 Mémoire Cherrier, 28 nov. 1866.

canon, être paroissiale et succursale tout ensemble; paroissiale pour des objets spirituels et succursale pour des objets civils-³⁸ quand ces objets ne sont pas incompatibles.

Cartier and Beaudry's definition of annex was too narrow and rigid for the bishop's lawyers. Legal authorities had never specifically defined the term. Cherrier disputed the contention that St-Jacques was not an annex because it belonged to St-Sulpice. The Seminary's lawyers obviously ignored that the State granted civil registers to St-Enfant-Jésus which belonged exclusively to the Sulpicians.³⁹ The law was therefore more supple than Cartier and Beaudry implied. He questioned their pretention that only the pastor or his curate could hold civil registers in an annex of Notre Dame. The Archbishop of Quebec named the priest serving in St-Jean, an annex of Notre Dame de Québec. Moreover, a special law passed in 1855 provided for episcopal appointments to annexes by designating pastors, curates and other priests as legally recognized officials.⁴⁰ Finally, the bishop's advisers challenged the fact that annexes could not have a fixed territory, since those in Quebec City proved the opposite.⁴¹ They thereby refuted the three elements of Cartier's definition.

The term "annex" had to have a broader meaning. It

38 ACAM, 901.139 Mémoire Cherrier, 28 nov. 1866.

39 Ibid., 901.139 Mémoire Cherrier, 10 janv. 1867.

40 Ibid., 901.136 Mémoire Cherrier, 21 nov. 1866.

41 Ibid., 752.704 Dissertation sur le droit de tenir les Registres civils dans les paroisses canoniques, 6 mars 1867.

was a place of worship which, while dependent on the parish church, also relieved it of curial burdens.⁴² This definition was specific enough to apply to the case in question and comprehensive enough to encompass all legally recognized annexes in Canada-East. The Seminary contended that since all churches relieved one another, they could not all be considered annexes.⁴³ But, the concept of dependence was essential, Cherrier emphasized.

Bourget's lawyers also argued against Cartier's opinion on marriage bans. According to the Attorney General the Civil Code required that they be published in civil parishes only. Was it not anomalous, asked Bourget's advocates, that Catholics should be compelled to go to Notre Dame for their bans, while Protestants obtained marriage licences like postage stamps. Cartier was displaying inflexibility. The law required marriage bans to prevent clandestine weddings. Cartier, however, "... s'oppose à ce que la publication se fasse là où elle remplirait son objet; (il) insiste qu'elle se fasse là où elle serait illusoire."⁴⁴ The Civil Code stated that bans should be published "dans l'église à laquelle appartiennent les parties..."⁴⁵ There was no mention here of canonical or civil parish church. No specific provision prevented marriage bans from being published.

42 ACAM, 901.136 Mémoire Cherrier, 21 nov. 1866.

43 Ibid., 355.121 Mémoire Rousselot à Truteau contre l'érection de St-Patrick, 8 nov. 1866.

44 Ibid., 901.139 Mémoire Edmund Barnard, 6 mars 1867.

45 J. U. Beaudry, Code des Cures, Marguilliers et Paroissiens. Presses de la Minerve, (Montreal, 1870).

Apart from dismemberment, the parties also fought over the Fabrique's chairmanship. The pontifical decree stipulated that the Superior would no longer be Notre Dame's pastor. But despite Caval's lobbying it neglected to state whether he could continue to preside over the Church Council. Bourget therefore insisted that Notre Dame submit to legislation which required that the pastor be president. In so doing, he wanted to end the Fabrique's dependence on the Seminary. By separating the office of Fabrique chairman from that of Sulpician Superior, a potential and often real, conflict of interest was eliminated. Baile saw this as an assault upon Sulpician control of parish administration and called upon Cartier to defend his prerogatives.

Reiterating arguments provided by Baile, the Attorney General affirmed that there was no legislation stipulating that the pastor be Fabrique chairman.⁴⁶ The Statute of 1860 exempted Montreal. In the absence of any specific legal provision, precedent determined practice. Now tradition did not always favor the curé. An affidavit from the Archbishop of Quebec indicated that up to 1860, the chief trustee of Notre Dame de Québec chaired Fabrique meetings.⁴⁷

A two-hundred year-old custom established that

46 ACAM, 901.139 Opinion Cartier, 30 avril 1866.

47 ASSM, L. Villeneuve à Baile, 31 mai 1867.

Fabrique meetings were presided by the Superior "qui comme chef du Séminaire réunissait les titres de Curé primitif, curé habituel et seigneur". This was especially true between 1678 and 1694 when the offices of Superior and pastor of Notre Dame were separate. Baile asserted, "Jamais le supérieur n'a présidé plus souvent et plus évidemment que pendant le temps où il y avait un curé actuel."⁴⁸ After 1742, the priest performing curial functions admittedly called Fabrique meetings, Baile confessed, but, this did not prove that he chaired them. Cartier concluded that by law, the pastor could not be Fabrique chairman. Church wardens could exclude him from their deliberations, and indeed could meet on their own should the Superior be absent.⁴⁹ Baile read Cartier's brief to the trustees who concurred with it.

Both the Attorney General's opinion and Baile's action dismayed Bourget. He emphasized that canon and civil law designated the pastor as chairman. In order to show that tradition also favored his interpretation, however, he requested Cherrier to examine the minutes of all Fabrique meetings held at Notre Dame. From his research, the noted lawyer prepared a brief which Bourget forced Baile to read to the wardens.⁵⁰

Cherrier asserted that tradition indeed vindicated

48 ASSM, Baile à Cartier, 24 sept. 1866.

49 ACAM, 901.139 Mémoire Cartier, 24 oct. 1866.

50 Ibid., RLB 15 Bourget à Baile, 26 juin 1866.

the pastor's right. When their offices were distinct, both the Sulpician Superior and the curé attended Fabrique meetings. What entitled them to do so? The former could attend as Seigneur of Montreal. The latter, however, had no other title than pastor of Notre Dame. In the absence of positive evidence to the contrary, the assumption was that the curé presided. The Fabrique's minutes indicated that at times the Superior, at times the pastor signed first. On some occasions, though the latter signed alone. After 1742, the bishop of Quebec required that the priest performing curial functions chair Fabrique meetings but permitted the Superior to attend as Seigneur. Cherrier concluded that the head of the community may have been present at most Fabrique meetings, but that the pastor chaired them.⁵¹

Baile and Cartier both rebutted these contentions. The Superior noted that before 1742, all Sulpicians could attend Fabrique meetings, no special title being required. During the same period, the head of the community twice signed the minutes alone.⁵² Baile, therefore, challenged the notion of the pastor's preeminence. For his part, Cartier maintained that, even if one accepted Cherrier's arguments, they merely proved one thing: the priest performing curial functions, not the proper pastor of Notre Dame, could chair Fabrique meetings.⁵³

51 ACAM, 901.139 Opinion Cherrier, 23 juin 1866.

52 ASSM, Baile à Cartier, 4 sept. 1866.

53 ACAM, 901.139 Opinion Cartier, 24 sept. 1866.

The pontifical decree also did not specify how canonical parishes would be supported. In 1865, Baile had asserted that civil law could compel the Seminary to endow all the new parishes and maintain their pastors. Two years later, St-Sulpice bitterly regretted these words: "C'est fâcheux que nous ayons dit de telles choses...."⁵⁴ Luckily, St-Sulpice remembered the statement which Bourget made on the subject that same year. He had argued that the Royal Ordonnance did not oblige the Sulpicians to serve all of Montreal. As long as they had the cure of several churches in the city, the government would be satisfied.⁵⁵ They provided the Propaganda with legal opinions from A. A. Dorion, J. U. Beaudry, and Cartier's law partners, François Pominville and Louis Bétournay to substantiate these claims.

The lawyers argued that the Sulpicians could freely appropriate their funds to any object within the Royal Ordonnance. The law did not force them to set aside specific monies for each particular item. Thus, the Seminary was not obliged to support the entire civil parish. Besides, the laity had always contributed to building churches and presbyteries.⁵⁶ The Seminary long ago had given up the cure of parishes on the extremities of Montreal island, without having to support them.⁵⁷ Whatever

54 ASSM, L. Villeneuve à Baile, 26 avril 1867.

55 ACAM, Second Mémoire du Séminaire de Montréal sur le démembrement, Baile et Larue, 10 oct. 1867.

56 ASSM Opinion A. A. Dorion, 22 janv. 1867.

57 Ibid., Opinion J. U. Beaudry, Pominville et Bétournay, 25 janv. 1867.

obligations the Sulpicians had to their parishioners ended with dismemberment.

Privately, though, the Seminary appeared more accommodating. St-Sulpice was willing to have the Fabrique administer St-Enfant-Jésus and to set aside enough money from the parish's revenue to support the pastor and his curate. "Ce que nous avons décidé pour le Coteau St-Louis, ... il serait prudent de le faire pour les autres paroisses que nous serons forcés d'abandonner. Nous éviterions par là les chicanes de Cherrier et Co."⁵⁸

On this issue, Bourget simply wanted St-Sulpice to make a contribution to the new parishes.

... on ne peut supposer que les curés de Paroisses qu'il s'agit d'ériger ici seront avant de bien longues années réduits à travailler de leurs mains pour gagner leur nourriture, quand on connaît les biens du Séminaire de St-Sulpice....⁵⁹

When St-Enfant-Jésus was erected, he suggested that the Seminary could acquit its obligations by relinquishing property rights over the church and its contents. "Car avec les seuls revenus de cette Eglise, quoi-qu'ils ne soient pas considérables, il y aura de quoi faire les frais du culte et du soutien du Curé et de ses Vicaires."⁶⁰

In any case, the bishop resolved not to press the issue unless the Propaganda encouraged him to do so. "Le

58 ASSM, L. Villeneuve à Baile, 26 avr. 1867.

59 APFR, SC 1866-67 Bourget au Séminaire de St-Sulpice et à la Fabrique de Notre Dame, 25 sept. 1866.

60 ACAM, RLB 16 Bourget à Barnabò, 22 mars 1867.

Séminaire, dans ce cas, sera laissé à sa conscience, et la Divine Providence y pourvoira autrement."⁶¹

Nevertheless, Bourget's delegates sought out a legal argument opposing the Seminary's contentions. Auguste-Cyrille Papineau, later a Superior Court judge argued that the Seminary's property was essentially ecclesiastical; that it was intended for specific purposes; the State could compel the Sulpicians to appropriate their funds for those ends. In addition, Church or civil authorities could determine how St-Sulpice's holdings would be apportioned.⁶²

Thus, regarding the Seminary's obligation to the civil parish, both parties appeared to adopt moderate attitudes at first. Legal briefs arguing extreme positions were ready for use, however, should the situation deteriorate.

The Sulpicians were not quite sure how to approach the Propaganda with the case. At first, they wanted to appeal against dismemberment and related issues. Bourget, however, observed that the Congregation had already heard all the arguments. "... Vous ne pouvez en appeler à Rome ... sans en appeler contre le Décret lui-même, c'est-à-dire sans en appeler du Pape mal informé au Pape mieux informé."⁶³ After consulting with their Superior General in Paris, they decided instead to ask Rome to explain the decree more fully.⁶⁴ They designated Baile and J. B. Larue as their

61 ACAM, RLB 16 Bourget à Truteau, 30 août 1867.

62 APFR, SC Appendice 1867 Mémoire A. C. Papineau sur le but des biens de St-Sulpice, 27 août 1867.

63 ACAM, 901.138 Bourget à Baile, 5 déc. 1866.

64 Ibid., 901.137 Baile à Bourget, 23 fév. 1867.

representatives. Meanwhile, as dismemberment continued into 1867, they resolved to abandon five parishes around the city limits.

The Fabrique appointed Rousselot, Beaudry and Thomas Ryan as spokesmen and asked G. E. Cartier to support them.⁶⁵ Bourget was astonished at this move. The purpose of Beaudry's mission escaped him, since the Propaganda would surely not adjudicate on matters of civil law, nor refer such an essentially ecclesiastical issue to the courts. He considered this to be another Sulpician ploy to instigate all possible opposition, "parce(que le Séminaire) ne veut pas du Décret Apostolique, qui le dépouille de l'autorité spirituelle, qu'il avait usurpée à Montreal ... afin qu'il puisse être Evêque des Sulpiciens, comme de ses autres diocésains."⁶⁶

What was the objective of these appeals? As noted above, the Seminary sought to show that civil and canon law necessitated the establishment of church-annexes in Montreal. From this premise, Bourget speculated about what Sulpician demands might be. "Je ne serais pas surpris (que le Séminaire) cherchât à obtenir que Notre Dame soit conservée sur le pied de l'ancien statu quo avec deux ou trois succursales, renfermant à peu près tout le territoire de la ville, afin de continuer à vivre dans l'indépendance."⁶⁷

65 ASSM, Compte rendu de l'Assemblée de Fabrique de Notre Dame, 20 déc. 1866.

66 ACAM, RLB 15 Bourget à Barnabò, 21 déc. 1866.

67 Ibid., RLB 16 Bourget à Truteau, 12 avr. 1867.

A few months later, Rousselot confirmed the bishop's astute forecast. His expectations, however, went beyond that point:

Oh si vous pouviez profiter de l'occasion pour obtenir l'exemption de Notre Dame de la juridiction de l'Evêque de Montréal! Si vous pouviez aussi obtenir que la cure fut de nouveau attachée à la place du Supérieur.... Si vous ne pouvez obtenir ce dernier point, n'oubliez pas de régler l'affaire de la présidence de fabrique.⁶⁸

The Sulpicians wanted Rome to declare dismemberment illegal. They then intended to reach a quid pro quo with the bishop. On the one hand, the Seminary would maintain its fief governed according to its traditions. On the other, the bishop could have five new parishes ruled by canon law.

Bourget was also faced with a choice of tactics. Edmund Barnard advised him to obtain a civil solution by requesting registers from the courts. In this way, the central argument against dismemberment, its illegality, would be destroyed. Otherwise, Cartier's prestigious opinion, backed by the British representative to the Holy See, would defeat the bishop's operations.⁶⁹

Bourget rejected this option, preferring that Rome resolve the controversy.⁷⁰ To him, the matter was above all spiritual. An unambiguous decision from the Propaganda would compel the Seminary to abandon all opposition. Accordingly, he delegated Canons Alexis Truteau and Etienne Hicks and Mgr. Joseph Désautels to defend his case before

68 ASSM, Rousselot à Baile, 12 avr. 1867.

69 ACAM, 572.000 Edm. Barnard à Bourget, 11 mars 1867.

70 Ibid., Paré à Edm. Barnard, 14 mars 1867.

the Holy See.

By far the most important of the three was Désautels. Cherrier, who worked with the pastor of Varennes in 1860 during the trial concerning the chairmanship of the Church Council, apparently considered him best able to vindicate the bishop's rights.⁷¹ An ambitious, aggressive, and singularly dedicated man, he played a key, and at times, decisive, role in subsequent controversies. Désautels enjoyed the bishop's confidence and esteem. Bourget used the pastor of Varennes to test several important cases relating to parish and fabrique law in the courts. Named honorary Cathedral Canon in 1862, he accompanied Bourget on his fifth trip to Rome. That same year, the Pope granted him the title of Secret Chaplain of Honor. In 1864, he published Manuel des Curés pour le bon gouvernement des paroisses et des fabriques dans le Bas-Canada which Bourget praised effusively.

Désautels also differentiated between the ecclesiastical and civil spheres. The State, he argued, should not legislate in spiritual matters except to reinforce by its coercive power the Church's authority, and then only when requested by the latter. His writings were imbued with nationalism. The British government, he asserted, through acts and treaties guaranteed the Church's independence, that is its right to self-government.

71 ASSM, Rousselot à Baile, 8 mars 1867.

Il est constant que la liberté (de culte)... a été, de tout temps, le plus grand obstacle à l'introduction du protestantisme chez nous ou notre anglification (sic).⁷²

Unwarranted State interference in spiritual matters undermined not only this tradition of independence so laboriously established over the years, but also French Canadian identity.

Désautels had no special love for the Sulpicians. In 1857, he had argued that the Holy See should compel the Seminary to pay the tithe on its income as seigneur of Montreal, as well as on its revenue as pastor of Notre Dame. After all, their founder had promised to pay the costs of establishing a diocese in Montreal.⁷³ Désautels was also quite unyielding on dismemberment. He confessed his faith in faits accomplis and advised Bourget to pursue his operations in spite of the obstacles.⁷⁴

Before the delegates departed for Rome, an anonymous brief appeared in the city. Entitled Dissertation sur le droit de tenir les Registres Civils dans les paroisses canoniques de Montréal, it presaged the escalation of the passionate debate to come.⁷⁵ The document was attributed to Firmin Vignon and resembled Désautels' writings by its language and argumentation. Vignon likened Bourget's

72 Archives du diocèse de St-Jean de Québec (ADSJQ), Notes sur la législation civile en matière ecclésiastique à l'occasion du 23 Vict., Chap. 67, 21 fév. 1861.

73 Ibid., Désautels à Paré, 9 janv. 1857.

74 Ibid., Désautels à Paré, 24 déc. 1866.

75 ASSM, Baile à Vignon, 30 juin 1868.

opponents to Governor Dalhousie who had attempted to subvert the clergy's rights in 1824. Their arguments were those of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and of the gallican pastor of Longueuil, Auguste Chaboillez. "C'est là ... que les Chrétiens rebelles à l'autorité spirituelle peuvent se former encore à l'art de désobéir et en même temps de se cuirasser contre les troubles de la conscience."⁷⁶ The opposition wanted to subjugate the Church to the State and to the whims of the majority. Such claims, however, were illegal, anti-catholic and anti-national. French Canadian historians, Garneau and Ferland, were cited to support this contention.⁷⁷

Vignon was not alone in drawing out abstract implications from the controversy. On arriving in the pontifical city, Désautels noted,

(Barnabò) nous a ... annoncé que MM. Cartier, Beaudry, Chauveau, Langevin et Bayle s'étaient fort montés ... contre ... (l'exécution du décret), à cause de l'union qui existe en Canada, entre l'Eglise et l'État, à cause de l'empiètement de l'Evêque sur le Civil, ... à cause des dangers auxquels serait exposée l'Eglise du Canada de perdre ses droits et ses privilèges etc. etc.....⁷⁸

The Seminary's advocates expanded on this idea. The protestant government of Canada, they contended, granted the Church such a favorable position that few states could boast better.⁷⁹ The Statute on the civil erection of

76 APFR, SC 1866-67 Dissertation, 6 mars 1867, 315.

77 Ibid., SC 1866-67 Dissertation, 6 mars 1867. 328.

78 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 13 avr. 1867.

79 Ibid., 901.136 Second Mémoire Baile et Larue, 10 oct. 1867.

parishes, for instance, allowed pastors to collect tithes, hold civil registers, and compel inhabitants to share the parish's financial burdens. The State, however, prescribed certain formalities which Canadian bishops considered so eminently reasonable that they incorporated these prescriptions in the ecclesiastical ritual of the province.⁸⁰ Since the municipal system in Canada East was founded on the parish, it was especially important that bishops follow these prescriptions.⁸¹

Unfortunately, Bourget ignored the law of the land. Several of his directives, in fact, interfered with the State's exclusive jurisdiction. His injudicious actions also deprived parishes of their revenue and placed them in legal limbo. The Seminary could not legally use its income outside the civil and canonical parish. The new parishes were therefore cut off from Sulpician munificence. By the same token, they could not rely on the Fabrique whose jurisdiction was restricted to Notre Dame's territory only.⁸² Beaudry here was enunciating a more forceful stand than before.

The bishop's operations had awesome consequences which transcended his diocese. By placing himself above the law, Bourget broke the pact between Church and State.

⁸⁰ ACAM, 901.136 Mémoire Baile-Larue, 10 oct. 1867.

⁸¹ APFR, SC 1866-67 Mémoire de la Fabrique de Notre Dame, J. U. Beaudry, 18 mars 1867.

⁸² Ibid., SC 1866-67 Mémoire Beaudry, 18 mars 1867.

Favorably-inclined politicians feared that the government would annul the Church's legislative privileges. The majority in the Cabinet was, after all, protestant. Would Catholicism then be in a better position? The American Church's status proved the opposite.⁸³

This line of argument shocked Bourget. "Ce qui m'a frappé ... c'est le ton décisif et tranchant qu'a pris l'Avocat du Séminaire et de la Fabrique, pour faire peur au St-Siège, en tâchant de lui faire croire que l'exécution du Décret Apostolique va anéantir la religion dans ce pays." Was the position of the Canadian Church, which rested on treaties, constitutions, statutes, and bills, so tenuous? Would politicians who constantly curried clerical favor and publicly professed their devotion to religion agree to abolish the Church's privileged status?

Est-ce que ce Séminaire et ces Marguilliers pourraient être d'accord avec tous les ennemis du Catholicisme pour travailler à la priver de la protection qu'il reçoit du Gouvernement? Est-ce que tous ces Membres du Parlement voudraient risquer de n'être élus par le peuple, en se montrant hostiles à la religion?⁸⁴

In Rome, the bishop's delegates retaliated.

Désautels, who wrote Bourget's briefs, used an aggressive idiom, at times bordering on the immoderate, to vindicate the prelate's actions. He accused the Seminary of hiding behind the laity in its rebellion against ecclesiastical

83 ACAM, 901.136 Mémoire Baile-Larue, 10 oct. 1867.

84 Ibid., RLB 16 Bourget à Désautels, 17 mai 1867.

authority.⁸⁵ Notre Dame's Church Council, the Irish, Cartier, Chauveau, and Beaudry were instruments of Sulpician policy which sought independence from the bishop.

Désautels accused his opponents of gallicanism. Their thesis on the union of Church and State effectively enslaved the former to the latter. Cartier outrageously pretended that the pastor's authority to perform a valid wedding came from the civil registers which the State granted him.⁸⁶ In fact, the very opposite was true. The right to marry emanated from the pastor's office.⁸⁷ Cartier's other assertions, that the courts could force the curé of Notre Dame to perform curial functions, that the Fabrique could deliberate without the pastor, smacked of the worst gallican doctrines. Moreover, tithing was not, as Cartier and Beaudry asserted, a privilege springing from the parish's civil erection. It belonged by right to the priest performing curial functions and was firmly entrenched in law. The Capitulation, the treaty of 1763 and the Quebec Act of 1774 guaranteed it.

Bourget's representatives also disputed that there existed a union of Church and State in Canada. Legislation passed in 1854 which Cartier himself introduced assured equal treatment before the law to all religious

85 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 23 avr. 1867.

86 APFR, SC Appendice 1867 Réponse Truteau et al. à J. U. Beaudry, 8 sept. 1867.

87 ACAM, 901.136 Opinion de E. Lef. de Bellefeuille, 14 avr. 1867.

denominations.⁸⁸ Prior enactments recognized the Catholic Church's right to self-government.

Finally, Désautels and his colleagues accused the Seminary of misappropriating its enormous funds. The Sulpicians had spent nothing to help establish the diocese in Montreal. Nor did they assist the Jesuits and Oblates during their first difficult years in the city.

Si un revenu annuel aussi considérable...
 était administré par des mains habiles
 et n'était pas si souvent détourné pour
 aller faire la fortune d'employés peu
 consciencieux ou d'exploitateurs comme
 quelques-uns que nous pourrions nommer,
 nous ne craignons pas de dire qu'ils auraient
 pu et dû faire toutes ces oeuvres qu'ils
 n'ont pas faites.

Strengthened by A. C. Papineau's brief, the bishop's envoys asserted that canon and civil law obliged the Sulpicians to attend to the entire civil parish, whether or not they accepted all the cures.⁹⁰ When St-Sulpice abandoned parishes at both extremities of the island, they also relinquished their rights over churches, presbyteries, and tithes. Moreover, they gave the new pastors real estate to serve as an endowment.⁹¹ Unfortunately, Bourget's request that his envoys not press this point before the Propaganda arrived too late. The bishop's

88 ACAM, 901.136 Réponse Truteau et al. à Beaudry, 1 mai 1867.

89 APFR, SC Appendice 1867 Mémoire Truteau, Désautels, Hicks en réponse à Baile et Larue, substituts de Ryan et McGee, 22 sept. 1867. 67.

90 Ibid., SC Appendice 1867 Réponse Truteau et al. à Beaudry, 8 sept. 1867.

91 ACAM, 901.136 "Analyse des Réponses faites par les députés de l'Evêque de Montreal", Lyon, Imprimerie d' Aimé Vingtrinier, 1869.

representatives suggested that, since Sulpician disobedience was at the root of the problem, Rome might have to impose canonical sanctions to bring the Seminary to heel.⁹²

Désautels was of course quite aware of the devastating impact which these writings had on his opponents. But, he was righteously indignant at the way in which the Seminary treated the bishop. He felt that this was ample justification for his behavior.

... Ces Messieurs doivent être bien surpris de s'entendre dire la vérité en face ... de voir que nous n'avons pas hésité de lever le voile qui cachait ... la hideuse nudité de leurs amitieuses prétentions; ils ont dû ... en être blessés profondément, eux qui ont toujours été traités avec tant de ménagement, tant d'égards, par le bon Evêque de Montreal....⁹³

Throughout the summer of 1867, the Seminary and its allies refuted these briefs. However, Baile sent home rather sombre news. He complained of being unable to get his point of view across to the Propaganda.⁹⁴

By autumn, even the optimistic Villeneuve was discouraged. The Seminary, he felt, committed a tactical error by abandoning half the canonical parishes with such eagerness. Bourget capitalized on this by citing documents which committed the Seminary to the entire civil

92 ACAM, SC Appendice 1867 Réponse Truteau et al. au mémoire de St-Patrice, 20 juin 1867.

93 Ibid., SC Appendice 1867 Mémoire Truteau et al., 22 sept. 1867. 65.

94 ASSM, L. Villeneuve à Baile, 9 août, 1867. Rousselot à Baile, 30 août 1867. L. Villeneuve à Baile, 1 déc. 1867.

parish. The Propaganda would obviously perceive a contradiction in the Sulpician case. On one hand, they refused to admit financial responsibility for the abandoned parishes; on the other, they were willing to take on these burdens if the canonical parishes remained annexes of Notre Dame. Both Cartier and Beaudry, who wanted St-Sulpice to hold on to the whole parish, feared that the Legislature would intervene in the bishop's favor.⁹⁵ The Seminary was in a gloomy mood.

Accordingly, the Sulpicians tried to enlist the hierarchy's support. They hoped that, if contradictory opinions on civil law persisted, the Propaganda would have to appoint an episcopal commission of inquiry. The controversy would then shift to more favorable terrain. Rousselot indicated that Bishops Horan and Lynch would write to Rome on the Seminary's behalf.⁹⁶ Charles Larocque, the new bishop of St-Hyacinthe, was quoted as saying that Bourget's delegates were slandering the Seminary most abominably. He was astounded that they could deny the union between Church and State.⁹⁷

Only Baillargeon, however, officially broke the episcopacy's silence. He vigorously defended the Sulpicians against accusations of gallicanism, affirming that everyone

95 ASSM, L. Villeneuve à Baile, 23 sept. 1867.

96 Ibid., Rousselot à Baile, 30 juin 1867.

97 Ibid., Rousselot à Baile, 13 août 1867.

considered them a mainstay of religion in Canada. The administrator also made Sulpician fears his own by stating, "On dit qu'il est question de désorganiser la maison de St-Sulpice de Montréal, et de la reconstituer d'une autre manière Ce serait détruire la Congrégation et obliger ceux qui en font partie à se retirer."⁹⁸ Thus, the threat which the Seminary made in 1865 two years later became an inevitable consequence of Bourget's policies. Villeneuve believed that Baillargeon's letter would severely undermine the prelate's reputation as a holy man entirely dedicated to the Holy See.⁹⁹

The bishop wondered how his colleagues could intervene publicly or privately in this matter. He had kept the dispute to himself especially to prevent further scandalous divisions among the hierarchy.¹⁰⁰ No bishop was sufficiently informed, therefore, to make a balanced and objective statement on the issue. "... Et je ne leur en ai jamais parlé, parce que, comme je ne m'occupe jamais de ce qu'ils peuvent faire, dans leurs diocèses, je crois avoir le droit qu'ils ne s'occupent pas de ce que je puis faire dans le mien."¹⁰¹ The episcopal palace, however, feared the appointment of an episcopal commission.¹⁰²

98 APFR, SC 1866-67 Mgr. Baillargeon à Barnabò, 28 nov. 1867.

99 ASSM, L. Villeneuve à Baile, 1 déc. 1867.

100 ACAM, RLB 16 Bourget à Barnabò, 7 juin 1867.

101 APFR, SC 1866-67 Bourget à Capalti, 19 août 1867.

102 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 4 août 1867.

Throughout 1867, Rome temporized. Barnabò and his secretary, Annibale Capalti, both of whom administered the Propaganda's current affairs, were in no hurry to make a definite judgement. They wanted to provide the opponents of dismemberment ample opportunity for a hearing. In addition, they sought assurances that dismemberment was not causing major disruptions in Montreal.

While Rome fully recognized the bishop's rights, it worried about timing. The Congregation was wary of popular opposition, especially from the Irish. Indeed, some Cardinals even feared a riot.¹⁰³ The diocesan press certainly indicated that Montrealers supported the new order. However, the Minerve discredited evidence of the popular approval. It even printed counter-petitions of parishioners opposed to dismemberment.¹⁰⁴ Barnabò was also concerned that the bishop's operations might deprive Montrealers of their civil rights.

The Propaganda wanted to avoid firm pronouncements which would hinder conciliation or make it difficult to reopen the case. A flexible posture was considered imperative to meet any unpredictable twist in the situation.

By the end of the year, however, the Propaganda felt fairly confident that Montreal was not tottering on the brink of civil unrest. Barnabò informed Désautels that Baile and Larue showed no inclination to press for an

103 ACAM 901.080 Truteau à Bourget, 25 juil. 1867.

104 Ibid., RLB 17 Bourget à Désautels et Hicks, 27 déc. 1867.

immediate decision. The Cardinal Prefect shied away from a formal sentence, alleging that the decree of 1865 confirmed Bourget's rights. Even Pius IX suggested that the bishop of Montreal act as if there had never been an appeal. But, Barnabò reminded Désautels that the Sulpicians could force him at any time to raise the matter before a general congregation of the Propaganda.¹⁰⁵

The bishop's delegates had reason to be satisfied with their mission. Barnabò, Capalti, and the Pope himself reinforced their opinions about the opposition. At various times during the year, these prelates gave Bourget's agents to believe that Baile was crafty, hypocritical, and arrogant; that Cartier and Beaudry were braggarts; that the Seminary was refractory. Barnabò seemed to suggest that Cartier was basing his case not on the law, but on his influence as Attorney General. The Cardinal Prefect apparently even condoned Désautels' interpretation of the Seminary's obligations to the civil parish of Notre Dame.¹⁰⁶ On many important points, therefore, Bourget's delegates felt that Rome vindicated them fully.

* * *

Conciliation proceedings in October 1865 and the pontifical decree itself indicated strongly that St-Sulpice could no longer cling to the status quo. Yet the Seminary

105 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 8 déc. 1867.

106 Ibid., 901.080 Truteau à Bourget, 31 mai 1867.

was bent on preserving as much of its privileged position as possible. On dismemberment, Baile wanted Bourget to extend to other churches and chapels the privileges already enjoyed by Notre Dame, St-Patrick, St-Enfant Jésus and Notre Dame de Grâce. In this way parishioners would still be free to attend either the parish or the local church. Obviously, this could not satisfy the bishop of Montreal who wanted to stabilize the spiritual life of parishioners. Nor did it fulfill the requirements of the Roman decree: creating distinct parishes (distinctas parochias) for the spiritual needs of the faithful (attentis nihilominus spiritualibus fidelium indigentis).

To prevent the decree from being implemented, the Sulpicians left no stone unturned. Once Bourget's mandement was issued, they could have quietly asked Rome for an official explanation. This would have kept the controversy at its pre-1865 proportions. Instead, they involved the Fabrique and the Irish. The Sulpicians could have complied with Bourget's wishes while awaiting a definitive pronouncement from Rome. Instead, they flouted his directives for acquiring civil registers and rejected his offer of attorneys to defend their case. Had St-Sulpice only been concerned about the legal implications of dismemberment, they could have lobbied for amendments to the law, as they had done in 1860. Their contacts in politics would undoubtedly have been an asset. Rather, they chose the path of systematic opposition. At public

meetings, their agents intimated that parishioners would have to pay a heavy price for dismemberment and predicted that the Irish community would disintegrate, despite Bourget's assurances to the contrary. The Sulpicians' opposition became common knowledge and was reported in the press. They must bear full responsibility for broadening the conflict.

The legal position against dismemberment rested on a rigid and at times improbable interpretation of the law. As Bourget's advisors indicated, Cartier's case was far removed from the legislators' original intentions. The Attorney General used civil registers as instruments of coercion and prevented them from fulfilling their stated purpose. The anomaly was that Protestant ministers, by virtue of their ecclesiastical office, received civil registers, whereas Catholic clerics, whom the Church empowered to perform weddings, were refused them. However Cartier perceived the problem, the State was effectively denying the priest's right to fulfill his spiritual tasks.

The Attorney General of course maintained that this double standard was logical because of the union between Church and State. Bourget's advisors admitted that the Catholic Church enjoyed certain legal privileges, but these existed for the mutual convenience of Church and State. For instance, the municipal system was structured on the Catholic parish. This special status, however, in no way affected the Church's fundamental rights

entrenched in many key articles of law. Chapter 18 of the Reformed Statutes of Lower Canada could not negate the bishop's power to dismember a parish canonically. It could only regulate civil erections. To pretend that registers, tithes, and marriage bans were privileges emanating from civil recognition was to ignore all the numerous examples negating this view.

The weakness of Cartier's case lay in its being tailor-made to fit the Sulpician position. His legal definition of "annex" illustrated this well. It contradicted practices prevalent not only in other dioceses, but in the very parish of Montreal. On the Fabrique chairmanship, Cartier unlike Cherrier, did no research. He merely repeated arguments provided by Baile. But, once again these were partial. The Attorney General contended that the legislation of 1860 exempted Montreal and Quebec City. He did not explain how, in that same year, the curé of Notre Dame de Québec was able, without a court case, to force the chief warden out of the Fabrique chairmanship.

Like Sulpician pretensions, Cartier's interpretation of the law was anachronistic, suited more to rural conditions than to urban centers which were expanding rapidly. The system of one parish per city with an unlimited number of annexes could not last.

Two dangers attended Cartier's involvement in this dispute. In the first place, it was impossible to

separate the Attorney General from the Sulpician advocate. Indeed, he and his allies encouraged this identification. His legal opinions became that much more authoritative when backed by the full force of his office. Apparently, Cartier even wanted Baile to involve the French Ambassador to the Holy See in the dispute so that he could apply diplomatic pressure on the Propaganda in the Sulpicians' favor.¹⁰⁷

Added to the prestige of his office were party and professional links with Beaudry, Ryan and McGee; and family ties with Montreal's chief Prothonotary, R. A. R. Hubert. The latter was Cartier's first cousin and owed his office to the Attorney General. La Minerve's participation merely served to underscore the fact that the Establishment opposed dismemberment. Bourget's belief that he was the victim of arbitrary tactics, becomes more plausible when all these elements are taken together.

The second danger lay in the arguments which Cartier and Beaudry used in Rome. The main thrust of their case was that Bourget's operations threatened the privileged position of the Catholic Church in Canada. This special status seemed dependent upon the Protestant majority. Cartier and Beaudry were challenging Bourget's thesis that the Church's rights were inscribed in the constitution.

107 ASSM, Rousselot à Baile, 10 janv. 1868.

This was more than an ethereal juridicial debate. It involved more than the Church as a religious organization. Cartier and Beaudry appeared to be weakening a fundamental institution of French Canadian society.

Cartier and Beaudry's position created that much more unease because it coincided with the Confederation debates, linked in several minds with the divorce issue. Was Vignon not expressing this basic anxiety when he wrote:

Et savons-nous nous-mêmes quel usage
la confédération qui s'organise fera de
ce principe (des majorités)? et si par
elle on nous donnera la vie ou la mort.¹⁰⁸

Two years earlier, the codification of civil law introduced amendments dealing with marriage which profoundly disturbed clergy and laymen alike in the diocese of Montreal. Clearly these were not reassuring times. Bourget considered that the opinions of French Canadian leaders were not attuned to those of the majority of Canada-East.

For his part, the bishop of Montreal initially wanted to erect canonical and civil parishes within Notre Dame's territory. It appeared, however, that Sulpician objections prior to 1865 regarding the debt and the Royal Ordonnance convinced the Propaganda that Bourget had to proceed differently. Nevertheless, he secured control over the spiritual administration of the parish and was able to standardize religious services. At the same time, the prelate avoided possible snags which civil recognition might

108 APFR, SC 1866-67, "Dissertation", 327.

cause and preserved all the benefits of Sulpician temporal administration.

Bourget can be faulted for not specifying from the beginning the nature of St-Sulpice's obligations to the parish. His mandement spoke of "un emploi honorable de ses immenses revenus". Did that mean that the Seminary should construct churches, presbyteries, sacristies, and schools for the canonical parishes lacking these facilities? Did it mean that the Seminary should support non-Sulpician pastors and their curates? And if so, for how long? His failure to deal with this matter clearly did not help to achieve a rapid solution.

Bourget's delegates also aggravated the controversy. These men certainly shared many ideas, sentiments and experiences with their bishop. Unfortunately, they were not as measured in their judgement, nor as restrained in their language. Canon Etienne Hicks, for example, privately referred to Baile as "le bonhomme" and to the Sulpicians as "les crapauds".¹⁰⁹ Désautels accused them of gallicanism, of corruption, and called on Rome to apply canonical censures. Bourget's delegates were infused with a self-righteousness that boded ill for the future. They were, however, reacting to an aggressive, rigid and well-organized opposition.

Dismemberment presented Rome with a dilemma to which it responded ambiguously. On the one hand, the Holy See

109 ACAM, 901.085 Hicks à Euchèr Lussier, 21 juin 1867.

did not want the civil courts to adjudicate on this question. On the other, the Propaganda declared itself incompetent to decide on issues of civil law. Barnabò rejected St-Sulpice's canonical interpretation of the decree, but did not direct the Seminary to comply with the bishop's wishes. The Cardinal Prefect worried about the civil implications of dismemberment, but encouraged Bourget to continue his operations. If the dispute involved essentially civil problems, the Propaganda should have turned down the appeals of the Seminary, the Fabrique and the Irish. This action would have forced a resolution of the problem. If, however, the issue was essentially spiritual, a sentence to submit, issued to either party, would have ended the dispute. Instead, by the end of 1867, the matter was in a state of suspension. Neither party was really satisfied, although Bourget's delegates drew justification and encouragement from Barnabò and Capalti's words. Were Désautels, Hicks and Truteau subtle enough to appreciate the Holy See's exquisite diplomacy?

CHAPTER IV
SPECIAL STATUS FOR ST-SULPICE

From 1868 to 1871, the dismemberment dispute had a more concentrated focus. In the first place, a stalemate developed in Montreal as Bourget and the Sulpicians consolidated their positions. Rome therefore became the primary theatre of action. In addition, the principals confronted each other directly. J. B. Larue, the Sulpician Attorney, assumed primary responsibility for the case against dismemberment at the Holy See. The laity, including the Fabrique, played a greatly diminished role. At the same time, the first Vatican Council brought Bourget to Rome. This permitted the bishop to state his position personally. Finally, the Propaganda, which wanted to bring about an entente, centered discussions on specific and practical considerations. Rome discouraged general statements of principle.

In 1868, the Sulpicians formally appealed against the way in which Bourget implemented the decree. They demanded that their old special status be restored, but over a reduced territory and termed this demand a sine qua non for settling the dispute. Meanwhile, in Montreal, the Seminary followed a policy of passive resistance, refusing to enter into the slightest commitment either with the

bishop or its own parishioners until the conflict was resolved.

As Bourget saw it, special status meant a privileged position for Sulpician curates and parishioners. These would benefit exclusively from the Seminary's largesse, while the parishes left to the bishop, those in greatest need of financial assistance, would have to fend for themselves. Clearly, such a discriminatory system would produce discontent and resentment. Bourget suspected that his concessions in 1865 only encouraged Sulpician pretensions. Accordingly, he again demanded that canon law exclusively govern Notre Dame's administration. In the interim, Bourget ensured that his canonical parishes operated on their own financial resources. In addition, he insisted that they record curial functions in canonical registers only, since the State refused civil registers.

Rome declined to impose a solution prejudicial to either party. As in 1865, the Propaganda wanted St-Sulpice and Bourget to reach their own accord and to facilitate it, a commission of three Cardinals was again appointed. The prelates put aside the opponents' all-out demands and concentrated instead on four thorny issues: the parishes' endowment, their civil recognition, the debt, and the Irish. The parties, however, remained adamant. Reconciliation proved impossible. The Propaganda was left with a series of contradictory facts and opinions. Accordingly, it sought out a detached French Canadian observer who could, if

not bring about agreement at home, at least provide the Cardinals accurate and impartial information on local questions. What better choice than the new and learned Archbishop of Quebec, A. E. Taschereau, former rector of Laval University! Five years had passed since the pontifical decree. After the initial flurry of unrest, relative calm fell over Montreal. The Propaganda showed dubious wisdom in shifting attention back to the province.

* * *

Barnabò's decision late in 1867 to temporize satisfied no one. Bourget felt that time was of the essence. The strong support which Barnabò and Capalti gave him would not last forever. Moreover, the Seminary was openly saying that its case was being delayed because of the Congregation's heavy agenda.¹ Such rumors incited opposition. Despite Désautels' assurances that the Seminary was utterly discredited in Rome,² Bourget wanted Barnabò at least to censure the Seminary's conduct.³ The bishop wrote to the Prefect, "Ici, toute la conduite du Séminaire porte à croire qu'il travaille sourdement à ramener toutes les choses sur l'ancien pied...."⁴ Lack of action encouraged opposition.

1 ACAM, 901.136 Bourget à Désautels, 21 fév. 1868.

2 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 25 janv. 1868.

3 Ibid., RLB 17 Bourget à Barnabò, 30 déc. 1867

4 Ibid., RLB 17 Bourget à Barnabò, 27 mars, 1868.

Baile also pressed the Cardinal-Prefect for a decision. The Superior had spent almost a year in Rome without tangible results, without even knowing when the Propaganda would decide the question. His colleagues were discouraged and frustrated. Rousselot noted that for months no news had reached the Seminary from Rome.⁵ Baile returned home empty handed, leaving Larue in charge of the case.

The Sulpicians, however, soon seized on the dubious legality of canonical registers and on the status of St-Patrick's parish to provoke action. At the end of June, Barnabò informed Bourget that Rome would hear the Seminary's appeal.⁶ The bishop of Montreal requested that formal proceedings be postponed until he arrived in the holy city the following year.⁷

The Sulpicians led the charge in Rome. They were convinced that jealousy really motivated Bourget's actions. Dismemberment was but a pretext to injure the Seminary.

La sola, la vera cagione dello smembramento è un'opinione del Vescovo attuale, al quale non piace, che il Seminario abbia la giurisdizione, e la influenza esercitata da secoli, col beneplacito di tutti i vescovi, della città, del governo. Si è detto che il Seminario acquistava troppa importanza.⁸

5 Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Québec (AAQ), Rousselot à Baillargeon, 20 mars 1868.

6 ACAM, RLB 17 Bourget à Barnabò, 23 juil. 1868.

7 Ibid., RLB 17 Bourget à Barnabò, 31 juil. 1868.

8 ASSM, document without title or date, written in 1869. Will be referred to as "Mémoire du Séminaire de St-Sulpice présenté à Rome". "The only real reason for dismemberment is the present bishop's antipathy for the power and authority which the Seminary has wielded for centuries with the concurrence of bishops, of the entire city, and of the government. It has been said that the Seminary was becoming too important."

Discrepancies in Bourget's decrees proved this contention. Why was the Fabrique exempted? Why did the bishop not establish church councils for all canonical parishes? Why were the Irish living outside St-Patrick's parish allowed to frequent their old church? Were the motives alleged for dismemberment, those of distance and population increase, not equally valid for them? By the bishop's grossly uncanonical acts, the Irish found themselves with two pastors: one, real, the other, optional.

While the bishop exempted certain parties from dismemberment, the Seminary had to bear its full weight. Did Bourget not affirm that the Sulpician community was obliged to use its wealth to attend to the entire civil parish? Did his lawyers not maintain that the State could force Notre Dame's pastor to administer the sacraments to the four corners of the city? Clearly dismemberment placed a disproportionate burden on the Seminary, without requiring the slightest commitment from parishioners.

The Sulpicians insisted that without their enormous sacrifices, dismemberment would have been inconceivable. The churches, presbyteries, and schools, upon which the new order was founded, greatly taxed their resources especially in the previous fifteen years. But, they gladly assumed these burdens expecting that the old administration would continue. Bourget, however, suddenly changed the rules of the game and thought that he could appropriate everything without compensation.

Besides being erratic and grossly unfair, episcopal policy was excessive. Bourget could have introduced changes gradually. For instance, he could have delimited an area, larger than Montreal's existing city limits, beyond which Notre Dame's cure could not extend, so that in fifty years, non-Sulpician parishes would begin to flourish. Instead, the new order upset customs, laws, and the social fabric itself.

Out of dismemberment sprung confusion, disorder, injustice, and unrest. The Seminary ended its plea by reminding the Cardinals,

... che il Seminario non accetterà cure e forse dimetterà quelle che ritiene, dall' antica in fuori, se rimanesse ferma la dismembrazione: e che non puo essere astretto a spendere come faceva nelle cure che non li appartengono.⁹

Beaudry dealt with the illegality of dismemberment at greater length, adding some fresh considerations. He noted that, to justify the bishop's actions, Désautels cited precedents and judicial opinions having very little weight. Bourget's operations fell under the authority of the Civil Code which the legislature sanctioned one month before the bishop's first act of dismemberment. Nothing in the Code stipulated that the official performing canonically valid weddings had the automatic right to hold

⁹ ASSM, *Mémoire du Séminaire*, 1869. "... The Seminary will not accept parishes and might abandon those it now holds, from the oldest outwards, if dismemberment prevails. St-Sulpice cannot be forced to spend money as it used to in those parishes which no longer belong to it."

civil registers. It did state very explicitly that the law only recognized those registers initialed by prothonotaries or judges. Beaudry regretted having to cite "des lois qui peuvent n'être pas en harmonie avec la doctrine Romaine, mais auxquelles nos tribunaux sont subordonnées...."¹⁰ These laws were passed both in the interests of public order and of the Church.

The harmonious relations between Church and State had produced many benefits. The eagerness with which public men served ecclesiastical interests testified to this. Beaudry asserted that without G. E. Cartier, Lower Canada would still be laboring under a Protestant government. Since Confederation, however, the province boasted an overwhelming Catholic majority in both the Cabinet and the legislative assembly. "Aussi tous sont unanimes à proclamer que sans lui, nous ne jouirions pas de ces avantages immenses."¹¹ And yet, the bishop's delegates accused him of gallicanism. Had not the former Minister of Militia also proved his devotion to the Holy See by defending the papal zouaves before the Protestant Parliament?¹²

Beaudry reiterated the dangers of Bourget's course. The majority of Quebec judges were Catholic and might be

¹⁰ APFR, SOCG (fév. 1871) Mémoire de la Fabrique, J. U. Beaudry, 12 juil. 1869. 102.

¹¹ ASSM, Mémoire de la Fabrique, J. U. Beaudry, 12 juil. 1869. 1.

¹² APFR, SC 1868-71, Beaudry à Propagande, cir. janv.-mars, 1869.

inclined to favor Roman doctrines in their judgements. Final appeals, however, went before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, an entirely Protestant body. Beaudry reminded the Cardinals that traces of Gallican doctrines remained in some of French Canada's jurisprudence, even though the Church had escaped its severest restrictions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Privy Council could invoke some of these obsolete laws to overturn the Church's privileged position in Quebec.¹³ He was implying of course that true and tried ways produced the best results; a favorably-disposed ruling élite and the State protecting the Church.

The Sulpician governing council grudgingly offered Bourget some concessions, despite his ignoble motives for dismemberment. Baile expressed his colleagues' feelings about these compromises.

Je suis persuadé que nos successeurs, nos amis, les amis de l'ordre et de la justice ... jugeront que nous avons cédé à de misérables impressions de crainte, en proposant nous-mêmes des concessions qui sont pour nous de véritables spoliations.¹⁴

The Sulpicians would definitely relinquish the cure of the five outer parishes, even if the State should declare their creation illegal. They would retain property rights over churches, chapels, and schools in this area. However,

¹³ ASSM, Mémoire de la Fabrique, 12 juil. 1869.

¹⁴ Ibid., Baile à Larue, 7 nov. 1868.

as a mark of devotion to their former parishioners, they would allow them to use these facilities.

In return, the Seminary required that the five inner parishes be reduced to annexes of Notre Dame. Rome would prohibit future dismemberments in this territory without Sulpician consent. St-Patrick's church would again serve the Irish community exclusively. St-Sulpice promised to appoint as rectors of its annexes only those priests who met with prior episcopal approval, but emphasized that the bishop's orders to them always go through the Superior. The Seminary would concede tithes and stole fees to these rectors. Finally, the Sulpicians insistently demanded that the Sulpician Superior be reinstated as Fabrique chairman.¹⁵

The plan of accomodation made no concession on, indeed did not mention, the Seminary's alleged obligation to the entire city.

After formulating its proposal, the Seminary considered dismemberment in a state of abeyance. Consequently, the Sulpicians adopted a retrenchment policy vis à vis their parochial obligations. In St-Bridgét's parish, which they reluctantly accepted because it was part of Cartier's constituency,¹⁶ there was an urgent need for one, if not more, churches to serve the predominantly working class population. They declined the responsibility, alleging

15 ASSM, Villeneuve à Larue, 29 juil. 1868.

16 Ibid., Villeneuve à Baile, 13 déc. 1867.

that Bourget would seize any church which they might build in the area.

Nous ne ferons rien de tout cela, et ces populations pourront gémir durant de longues années, dans un état pitoyable de privation. Il en sera de même dans plusieurs autres quartiers de la ville.¹⁷

In Hochelaga parish, the Sulpicians had constructed a chapel on land provided for that purpose by a pious donor. When they abandoned that cure, however, the chapel was in disrepair. St-Sulpice refused either to make the necessary renovations or cede the land to the original owners. Baile referred to the suspended state of affairs in Rome. An exasperated Bourget replied: "Je ne connais pas bien, Monsieur le Supérieur, toute la portée de cette réponse. Mais il est visible que le Séminaire après avoir refusé de son plein gré, la desserte de cette nouvelle paroisse, ne la favorise guère dans les établissements religieux qui lui sont indispensables."¹⁸

While the Seminary stabilized its position, Bourget consolidated his own gains. In January 1868, he ordered non-Sulpician pastors to perform all curial duties in their own churches and to record these functions in ecclesiastical registers. Parish life thus assumed greater regularity and orderliness. Apparently, neither Cherrier nor Barnard wholeheartedly approved of this

17 ASSM, Baile à Larue, 29 juil. 1870.

18 ACAM, RLB 18 Bourget à Baile, 18 sept. 1868.

exclusively canonical procedure, arguing that the State obliged pastors to keep civil registers.¹⁹ Désautels, on the other hand, strongly endorsed the bishop's actions. No judicial authority, he affirmed, would nullify a marriage on the grounds that the Prothonotary had not authenticated the registers. Ecclesiastical records were sufficient proof of civil status. Sooner or later, the Court of Appeal formally would confirm every celebrant's legal right to State registers. Meanwhile, he argued, Bourget's actions agreed with Capalti's advice to let events rebut Sulpician objections.²⁰

Désautels even suggested that Bourget coerce Sulpician pastors to keep canonical registers. In this way, no one would enjoy a privileged status. Dismemberment would be truly complete.²¹ Bourget rejected this suggestion. The Seminary, he thought realistically, would merely fall back on its usual obstructionism to impede episcopal instructions.²²

Before the prelate left for the Holy See, Vignon, rector of Collège Sainte Marie, assessed his chances of success. The Jesuit was regularly informed about developments in the controversy and received copies of the bishop's briefs. He was therefore in a good position

19 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 25 janv. 1868.

20 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 25 janv. 1868.

21 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 10 janv. 1868.

22 Ibid., 901.136 Bourget à Désautels, 21 fév. 1868.

to offer advice. The main drawback to success, as Vignon saw it, was that Bourget worked in isolation. A change of approach was imperative. Much as with the Concordat between Pius VII and Napoleon, this issue involved a matter of right and opportuneness. Rome had decided the former in the bishop's favor. But, the Seminary now contended that the timing was at fault. To dispel the Propaganda's fears, Bourget should seek help from other parties who could corroborate his testimony.

Vignon also emphasized that a permanent representative was essential in Rome. Larue, Sulpician Attorney at the Holy See, had recently succeeded in turning the tide in the Seminary's favor. Friends of the diocese, including Cherrier, wanted Bourget to appoint Désautels as his resident envoy. Vignon noted that the pastor of Varennes had greatly contributed to the Seminary's rout in 1867. Unfortunately, he had been recalled to Montreal too soon. Vignon urged Bourget to use his experience and influence fully.

... le triomphe de votre cause sera celui des vrais principes de l'Eglise ... La persuasion, c'est que non seulement le S. Siège vous favorisera, mais qu'il émettra un blâme authentique contre ce système de principes et de loi, organisé pour opprimer l'Eglise.²³

Vignon's words went unheeded as Bourget defended, more or less alone, his administration before the Propaganda.

23 ACAM, 355.101 Vignon à Bourget, 10 oct. 1868.

An exasperated Désautels observed that Bourget seldom informed him of goings-on and then provided only fragmentary accounts. After several months of performing inconsequential tasks, Désautels confronted his bishop, demanding to participate fully in important diocesan affairs. Only in July 1869, did Bourget finally oblige. Désautels was delighted. His influence at the Propaganda was considerable. In addition, "J'ai le malheur moi,... de ne pas voir le Pape ou le bon Dieu dans chaque employé des Congrégations...."²⁴ These two factors would be assets in winning the bishop's case.

Bourget first answered Sulpician objections. He maintained that canonical registers did not compromise ecclesiastical interests in the province. Neither the legislature nor the judiciary had voiced disapproval. Not one legal case arose from dismemberment.²⁵ He therefore considered legislative redress superfluous, and possibly dangerous. "Il désirait n'entraver en aucune manière le fonctionnement de la nouvelle Constitution de la Confédération ... qui ... rencontre encore de sérieuses difficultés."²⁶ Bourget guaranteed that the State would recognize canonical registers.

Bourget assured Rome that dismemberment was producing innumerable benefits. All parishioners enjoyed vastly

24 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 13 juil. 1869.

25 Ibid., 901.136 Analyse des réponses faites par les députés de S. G. Mgr. l'Ev. de Montréal en 1867-68, Bourget à SC, 23 mars 1869.

26 APFR, SC 1868-71 Bourget à SC, 10 mars 1869, 223.

improved pastoral services. At St-Enfant-Jésus, where one Sulpician resided prior to 1865, three priests now met the people's needs. St-Henri had never had a resident curate. Now three clergymen barely coped with the enormous task.²⁷ The pastor at St-Vincent de Paul noted that adolescents in his parish were finally receiving first communion and some adults, confirmation. People no longer died unattended. The high cost of transportation did not burden parishioners who wanted their babies baptized.²⁸ Bourget concluded "loin de me reprocher d'avoir procédé trop vite au démembrement de Notre Dame, je me reprochais de ne l'avoir pas fait plus vite."²⁹

Bourget attributed the difficulties arising from dismemberment to the Sulpicians' desire for independence and to their allies' obstructiveness and arbitrariness. Striking confirmation of this thesis came from an unexpected source. Antoine Giband, a Sulpician formerly charged with Notre Dame's cure, admitted

"Le principe de la dépendance de l'Evêque en ce qui concerne le soin des âmes et de l'administration des sacrements est admis le moins possible au Séminaire. Il est convenu que MM. les Curés n'entreprendront rien tant soit si peu important dans leurs paroisses sans être concertés avec la Supérieur.... Le fait de la division canonique des paroisses est atténué autant que possible."³⁰

27 ACAM, 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 6 mars 1869.

28 Ibid., 355.125 J. B. Langlois à Bourget, sans date[†] 1869.

29 Ibid., 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 6 mars 1869.

30 Ibid., 901.059 Giband à Bourget, 6 avril 1869.

This confession confirmed Bourget's suspicion that the Seminary's administrative body alone orchestrated the opposition.³¹

The bishop believed that Sulpician demands for special privileges meant reverting to the status quo. St-Sulpice not only questioned the way in which Bourget implemented the pontifical decree, but its very substance, dismemberment.³²

"Il (démembrement) n'existe aux yeux de ces Messieurs qu'en autant qu'il confère au Séminaire des privilèges qui ne lui étaient pas dûs et dont il abuse pour travailler à dépouiller l'Evêque (de) droits bien légitimes et très nécessaires."³³

By reinstating annexes, the Holy See would bestow quasi-episcopal powers on St-Sulpice.³⁴

If the Seminary wished to turn back the clock, Bourget saw no alternative but to demand that all Sulpician privileges be cancelled. The bishop admitted that this request would delay the final outcome of proceedings. Nevertheless, he felt it necessary to ensure episcopal rights.³⁵

In Montreal, the bishop's friends were kept relatively informed of developments at the Propaganda. The Cathedral

31 ACAM, 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 10 mai 1869.

32 Ibid., 901.059 Bourget à Simeoni, 6 août 1869.

33 Ibid., 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 30 juil. 1869.

34 Ibid., 901.059 Bourget à Simeoni, 6 août 1869.

35 Ibid., 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 30 juil. 1869.

Canons, Vignon and Cherrier received copies of Bourget's major brief. As the months passed without prospect of a final solution, this group became increasingly apprehensive. Cherrier worried about the effects of the Québec bishops' possible intervention.³⁶ Paré suspected St-Sulpice of mounting an international conspiracy against the implementation of the decree with the help of the Canadian, British, French, and even the American governments. "V(otre) G(randeur) sait que St-Sulpice emploiera le vert et le sec pour réussir...."³⁷

In August 1869, the general congregation of the Propaganda reached a decision. It named a commission composed of Barnabò, Monaco and Reisach, to elucidate contradictory facts and arguments, and bring about an accord. These Cardinals acted strictly as mediators and therefore were not expected to propose a solution to the Propaganda.³⁸ The commission met twice with the opponents, in March and July 1870. Interest centered primarily on controversial questions: the debt, the canonical parishes' endowment, and the Irish.³⁹

Both parties entered conciliation proceedings with confidence. Villeneuve was convinced that, although the

36 APC., MG24 B46 Papiers C. S. Cherrier, I, J. O. Paré à Cherrier, sans date (1869).

37 ACAM., 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 6 avril 1869.

38 ASSM, S. Martini à Larue, 17 janv. 1870.

39 ACAM, 901.059, Bourget à Paré, 24 août 1869.

Sulpicians would not win on all points, they would be absolved of all the vicious calumnies contained in Bourget's Analyse.⁴⁰ For Baile, further compromises were out of the question. "Nous avons poussé les concessions au delà de tout ce que le droit, au delà de tout ce que le bon sens pouvait demander de nous."⁴¹ The bishop's Analyse with all its accusations and innuendoes wounded him to the quick. Again, he intimated that Bourget was the victim of some fantastic delusion or of some evil minds.

Bourget for his part welcomed conciliation as an act of providence, an indication that a definitive solution was imminent.⁴² Désautels predicted that, as a minimum, the bishop would obtain full implementation of the decree. He hoped that Rome would force St-Sulpice to allocate specific monies to the old parish of Notre Dame, "si l'on ne va pas jusqu'à fixer la dotation de chaque église."⁴³

During this period, the bishop's collaborators again criticized his work patterns. Observed Désautels, "Mgr. voudrait que je lui laisserais le soin de dire seul ce qu'il veut dire, quand et comme (sic) il veut le dire."⁴⁴ Barnabò, however, invited the envoy to attend conciliation sessions, which seemed to irritate Bourget. Désautels'

40 ASSM, Villeneuve à Larue, 3 sept. 1869.

41 Ibid., Baile à Larue, 24 sept. 1869.

42 ACAM, 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 24 août 1869.

43 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 25 sept. 1869.

44 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 9 oct. 1869.

success was short-lived. Illness suddenly forced him to return to Canada early in 1870. His replacement, Isidore Gravel, curé at Laprairie, complained about Bourget's secretiveness. He also deplored the bishop's lack of concentration in work. The prelate dissipated his energies on too many projects without focusing on the important ones. "... L'Evêque de Montréal chasse mal parce qu'il chasse trop de lièvres à la fois et des lièvres à couleurs trop variés."⁴⁵ No substantial progress had occurred over their ten-month stay in Rome, he reported. Prospects for an expeditious settlement dimmed with the advent of the Vatican Council, which would doubtless monopolize the Propaganda's time.

Meanwhile each side prepared its positions. The Fabrique debt was a main obstacle to entente. The Sulpicians largely blamed Bourget's erratic policies for the rapid rise of the debt. Several years earlier, they had assumed the task of extinguishing these commitments in return for the Fabrique's net revenue. In the interval, however, the bishop requested them to buy or build churches, schools, and chapels, which they financed by borrowing large sums of money at interest. These heavy responsibilities prevented them from attending to the parish debt. Sulpician priorities obviously took precedence over those of the Church Council.⁴⁶

45 ACAM, 901.081 I. Gravel à Paré, 21 nov. 1869.

46 ASSM, Villeneuve à Rousselot, 9 juin 1870.

Dismemberment also prevented the wardens from liquidating the debt because it reduced their revenues. At St-Patrick, bench rentals plummeted as the Irish were directed to other parishes. At Notre Dame de Grâce, the pastor appropriated these monies for his own use. He also continued to bury the dead in the local cemetery, which deprived the Fabrique of fees collected at Côte des Neiges cemetery. To remedy this situation, Larue proposed that the Church Council's traditional sources of income be preserved.⁴⁷

Bourget, on the other hand, assailed the Fabrique's extravagant and uncanonical financial administration for which he blamed the Seminary. He had actually heard church wardens complain of being unable to pay parish debts because the Seminary constantly stood in their way.⁴⁸ Far from unjustly burdening the Fabrique, dismemberment in fact helped to eliminate these obligations. C. S. Rodier, chief warden, assured Bourget that while expenditures decreased since 1865, revenues remained more or less stable.⁴⁹

The bishop of Montreal estimated the debt to be \$360,000 in 1865. Since then, the Church Council sold property worth some \$200,000. They therefore would acquit their commitments by continuing to transfer their annual income to the Seminary within fourteen years.⁵⁰

47 ASSM, Larue à Sacconi, 2 juil. 1870.

48 ACAM, 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 24 août 1869.

49 Ibid., 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 28 oct. 1869.

50 Ibid., 901.136 Résumé des réponses de l'Evêque de Montréal aux questions des Cardinaux dans la conférence du 13 juil. 1870.

The debt was not an insurmountable obstacle. It could easily be liquidated. Dismemberment was helping to achieve this goal.

Another bone of contention between Bourget and St-Sulpice was how canonical parishes would be supported. The Seminary affirmed that they should be endowed without recourse to Sulpician property and without diminishing the Fabrique's revenues.⁵¹ Larue cited Article I of the pontifical decree which explicitly stated that the Seminary was not accountable to the bishop for its private holdings. Non-Sulpician pastors and their curates could adequately maintain themselves with the tithe, some \$4,000 in their combined areas, and private donations. They could not usurp church bench rents, which belonged either to the Seminary or to the Fabrique.⁵² Nor should they appropriate stole fees which traditionally belonged to the Church Council. Larue also maintained that if Bourget wanted full jurisdiction over non-Sulpician churches, he would have to buy them.

Bourget wanted to show the Propaganda that since dismemberment non-Sulpician pastors successfully supported themselves. This established the viability of the new order. At the same time, though, he insisted on St-Sulpice's strict obligation to endow the new parishes, invoking the principle of equality between the Sulpician

51 ASSM, Larue à Sacconi, 2 juil. 1870.

52 Ibid., Villeneuve à Larue, 11 oct. 1869.

and non-Sulpician parishes.

Toutes les nouvelles paroisses devraient être mises sur le même pied et administrées d'après les mêmes règles, si l'on veut éviter tout murmure, tout mécontentement dans le Clergé et parmi les fidèles. Car si l'on s'aperçoit que les paroisses qui en ont moins besoin sont spécialement favorisées par le Séminaire pendant que les plus pauvres seraient abandonnées, il en rejaillirait certainement sur lui beaucoup d'odieux.⁵³

According to the bishop of Montreal, all canonical parishes, except one, showed annual surpluses, varying from \$47 to \$800.⁵⁴ These statistics indicated a wide disparity, which was further aggravated by a lack of facilities, like churches, presbyteries, and sacristies, in some parishes.

How did Bourget propose to close this gap? The Cardinals suggested civil recognition. This would give each parish a church council and serve as a basic endowment.⁵⁵ Bourget certainly believed that parishes could better support themselves "... (en rentrant) dans l'état normal des autres paroisses du pays où ... la majorité des paroissiens peut forcer la minorité à se mettre à contribution...."⁵⁶ He therefore accepted the notion that the faithful should assume an equitable share of responsibility. The prelate also considered that he could easily obtain civil recognition.

53 ACAM, 901.136 Résumé des réponses de l'Evêque de Montréal, 13 juil. 1870.

54 Ibid., 901.137 Mémoire concernant les difficultés qui pourraient être soulevées par le Procureur du Séminaire, juil. 1870.

55 Ibid., 901.060 Bourget à Paré, 7 mai 1870.

56 Ibid., 901.137 Mémoire concernant les difficultés..., juil. 1870.

This position provoked swift and strong reaction at home. The Cathedral Chapter fired off a telegram urging "No concession even indirect". Paré pressured Bourget to drop civil recognition. "... Quel argent cela apportera-t-il pour bâtir une Eglise, ... et pour faire vivre le Curé et ses Vicaires et soulager les pauvres de sa Paroisse! Et puis le Séminaire restera avec ses immenses richesses pour les quelques paroisses qu'il dirigera. C'est vraiment une moquerie de l'Evêque.... C'est un triomphe immense pour le Séminaire...."⁵⁷ The Chancellor did not see how Bourget could achieve State recognition by regular means. Désautels, for his part, reiterated that St-Sulpice's enormous wealth was intended to cover the cost of worship for the island of Montreal. This being the case, canonical parishes neither needed civil sanction nor fabriques for their support.⁵⁸

The prelate calmed fears at home by emphasizing that State recognition would not dispense the Seminary from extending its generosity to all canonical parishes.⁵⁹ Although Bourget did not specify his position on endowment, he appeared to want the Sulpicians to guarantee that the pastors' living standards or the quality of worship would be the same throughout the city and suburbs.

57 ACAM, 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 27 mai 1870.

58 Ibid., 901.079 Mémoire à Bourget sur le démembrement, anonyme, sans date ± mai 1870.

59 Ibid., 901.060 Bourget à Paré, 6 juin 1870.

Finally, the Cardinals tried to bring the parties together on St-Patrick's. The Seminary demanded that the parish be abolished to resolve the problem of mixed population. French Canadians would be reintegrated into Notre Dame. The Sulpicians had often complained about the small area which Bourget assigned to the mother parish in 1865. Their proposal disposed of this complaint. Larue rejected Bourget's offer that French Canadians be accommodated at the Gesù or the Cathedral. Rivalry and misunderstanding would inevitably result if the Seminary were to share parishioners with another religious community or with the bishop.⁶⁰ Larue felt so strongly about this issue that he tried to get Horan of Kingston, Lynch of Toronto, and even the Cardinal Primate of Ireland, Paul Cullen, to intervene in the Irish cause.⁶¹

In the interests of entente, Bourget was quite willing to transfer the title of parish church from St-Patrick, to the Cathedral or the Gesù. He insisted, however, that the parish be preserved. The welfare of religion required that more parishes be created, not that some be abolished.⁶² Complaints about Notre Dame's size, he maintained, were unfounded. With a population of 13,750, the mother-church was large enough to meet the needs of its parishioners.

60 ASSM, Larue au Cardinal Sacconi, 2 juil. 1870.

61 Ibid., Larue à Baile, 8 juil. 1870.

62 ACAM, 901.060 Bourget à Paré, 7 mai 1870.

Any increase would make it unmanageable.⁶³

The parties stood their ground. Reconciliation failed. Cardinals Barnabò, Monaco, and Sacconi could not even obtain accurate information on controversial issues. Nevertheless, they did succeed in defining a broad position. They accepted that dismemberment was a reality. But, Bourget would have to endow the parishes without Sulpician resources. St-Patrick would serve the Irish community exclusively. The Cardinals also toyed with further unspecified concession to appease the Seminary.⁶⁴ The commission, however, was not to make recommendations. It therefore referred back to the Propaganda those questions needing further elucidation.

Bourget and St-Sulpice emerged with the same assurance as when they entered the proceedings. The bishop believed that the Propaganda, cognizant at last of Sulpician aspirations to independence, would fully vindicate his rights.⁶⁵ Villeneuve again feared that Rome would be too generous with the Sulpicians. He did hope, however, that the Congregation would exempt them from episcopal jurisdiction.⁶⁶ In late September 1870, Cadorna interrupted the Propaganda's business with his breach of Porta Pia. Consequently, Canadian affairs were deferred.

63 ACAM, 901.137 Mémoire concernant les difficultés..., juil. 1870.

64 APFR, SOCG (août 1869) Congresso, 21 mars 1870. 26 juin 1870.

65 ACAM, 901.060 Bourget à Paré, 16 juil. 1870.

66 ASSM, Villeneuve à Larue, 28 juil. 1870.

Meanwhile, attention briefly focused on Montreal. As the new year approached, civil registers once again came to the fore. Barnard continued to urge a legal solution. From his contacts in Superior Court, he had reason to believe "... qu'une décision en notre faveur, ne serait pas désagréable".⁶⁷ Godefroi Lamarche, diocesan censor at the Nouveau Monde, favored a political settlement. He hoped that Gédéon Ouimet, provincial Attorney General, and other prominent figures whom Lamarche saw, would press the chief Prothonotary to grant the registers. Worn down by political pressure,⁶⁸ Hubert compromised. He asked Rousselot for a written authorization allowing the canonical pastor to hold civil registers at St-Vincent de Paul as an annex of Notre Dame. The Sulpician pastor replied:

Je suis arrêté par un obstacle ... que vous saurez apprécier la réalité et la force insurmontable pour moi; l'érection de l'église St-Vincent de Paul ... en paroisse canonique. Toute juridiction sur cette paroisse canonique ... m'a été absolument enlevée.⁶⁹

One month earlier, St-Sulpice still insisted in Rome that canonical parishes could not obtain State registers.⁷⁰

At the Propaganda, the Cardinals decided to proceed as if mediation attempts had never occurred.⁷¹ They still

67 Archives du Séminaire de St-Hyacinthe (ASSH), Boîte 9 A2R6 Papiers G. Lamarche, Edmund Barnard à Lamarche, 9 janv. 1871.

68 Ibid., Papiers Lamarche, Barnard à Lamarche, 11 janv. 1871.

69 AAQ, DM F-40 Rousselot à Hubert, 17 janv. 1871.

70 APFR, Acta (24 fév. 1871) Baile à Barnabò, 6 déc. 1870.

71 ASSM, S. Martini à Larue, 24 janv. 1871.

wanted a compromise. Monaco stated that canon law could be implemented in Montreal only by stages. But, there was an immediate need for concord.⁷² Barnabò too decried the antagonists' intransigence.

As the prelates deliberated, Filippo de Angelis, Bourget's contact at the Propaganda lobbied. He was an eminent professor of canon law at the Roman College and a consultor to the Congregation on this controversy. De Angelis served Bourget well in exchange for a fee. He told the bishop that his chances were good, even though the Sulpicians were powerful adversaries. The most controversial issue was the debt. He promised to try to have the Seminary assume full responsibility for it.⁷³ In the meantime, de Angelis urged Bourget to seek civil recognition. Achieving this objective would resolve the controversy.⁷⁴

Before the final outcome, Bourget sought to recapture the essence of his problems with State officials.

Quel est donc le noeud de cette inextricable difficulté?... C'est Mr. Cartier qui exerce son droit de pression ou plutôt d'oppression. Ainsi l'on assume qu'il a promis à Mr. Hubert que s'il refuse les Registres ... il sera fait Juge de la Cour du Banc de la Reine. L'on a dit dans le même temps qu'il avait promis à Mr. Beaudry, que s'il défendait bien la cause du Séminaire, il serait fait Juge; c'est ce qui est arrivé Le Ministère

72 ACAM, 901.082 P. E. Lussier à Bourget, 28 janv. 1871.

73 Ibid., 901.082 P. E. Lussier à Bourget, 27 janv. 1871.

74 Ibid., 901.082 Lussier à Bourget, 22 fév. 1871.

du Gouvernement local ayant à s'occuper à Québec de cette affaire, Mr. Cartier lui a signifié d'Ottawa⁷⁵ ses ordres ... par trois télégrammes.

The bishop believed that the Propaganda should dismiss this problem as a temporary abuse of power by a man who had sworn to defend Sulpician interests at all cost.

Finally, the Propaganda met in general congregation on February 10, 1871. The Cardinals decided to appoint A. E. Taschereau, newly named Archbishop of Quebec, as a local mediator. Should reconciliation prove impossible, Taschereau was to give the Congregation information about civil recognition, the debt, and the Irish question.⁷⁶ Pius IX approved the Propaganda's selection.

* * *

Bourget could not accept the Sulpician accomodation without utterly contradicting himself. The plan meant that the vast majority of the population would again find itself under the former system, deprived of the spiritual benefits of dismemberment.⁷⁷ In addition,

75 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à Lussier, 19 fév. 1871.

76 Ibid., 901.082 Lussier à Paré, 7 mars 1871.

77 Statistics showing the population per parish of Montreal taken from Pagnuelo, Etudes, 375

	<u>Fr. Cath.</u>	<u>Eng. Cath.</u>	<u>Total</u>
Notre Dame	21,796	7,400	29,196
St-Patrick	1,013	3,080	4,093
Ste-Brigide	14,520	5,176	19,696
St-Jacques	9,085	1,420	10,505
St-Joseph	7,046	2,114	9,160
St-Ann	1,980	8,700	10,580
St-Vincent	1,700	550	2,250
St-Henri	7,975	2,525	10,500
St-Enfant-Jésus	6,523	226	6,749
N.D.G.	1,427	90	1,517
Nativité	662	350	1,012

St-Sulpice was relinquishing parishes where generally lower income groups predominated and which lacked the most elementary facilities. Canonical pastors did not have living accommodations. They were expected to build their own churches from their parishioners' contributions, but were deprived of legal means to distribute the financial load equitably. Moreover, the pastors would have to survive on the tithes of the poor. As for civil recognition, St-Sulpice doubted that it could be achieved, but determined to leave the bishop with that problem since he brought it upon himself. Clearly, the Sulpician proposal was not an accommodation. It left Bourget with all the burdens, while the Seminary lost a small portion of the tithe and the use of its churches and chapels in non-Sulpician parishes. This was a spoliation!

Giband's testimony and Villeneuve's recommendation that St-Sulpice be exempted from episcopal authority, confirmed Bourget's persistent opinion that the Seminary was aiming at total independence. In effect, the Sulpicians considered themselves involved in a power struggle with the bishop. This explained their reticence to initiate an accommodation. This explained their plan, which consisted essentially in dividing the island in half, albeit in unequal portions. This explained how they perceived Bourget's motivations in the controversy: jealousy of Sulpician wealth and power.

The bishop was certainly intent on entrenching

episcopal authority in Montreal, both for him and his successors. But, another important issue was at stake in this struggle: establishing a regular parish life and obliterating disparities in spiritual services from one district to another. Since the Sulpicians possessed immense landed wealth on the island, they had to contribute to these goals.

Bourget, however, committed two tactical errors. He continued to be vague about Sulpician obligations to the old parish. This lack of precision kept the discussion largely on an abstract level. In addition, the bishop, demanded, as a reaction to special status, that canon law be fully implemented in Montreal. This confirmed observers' opinion that the nature of the controversy was a power struggle, not a question of parish administration.

With the first Vatican Council and Garibaldi's invasion of Rome, it is a wonder that the Propaganda could devote any time to Canadian affairs. That it did, is perhaps a tribute to the resilience of bureaucratic apparatus. Conciliating two completely divergent positions presented immense difficulties. St-Sulpice's threatened departure still hung over the Cardinals. By focusing on specific issues, the Propaganda undoubtedly adopted the best means for an entente. When the proceedings failed, however, the Congregation should have clarified the situation. Sulpician demands and the length of negotiations in Rome took their toll on the pontifical decree. Could St-Sulpice

expect to receive exempt status from the Holy See? Would annexes be reintroduced in their territory? Would their community be permitted to leave the island? The Propaganda should have answered these vital questions before appointing a local mediator. By doing so, it would have reaffirmed the fundamental principles of the pontifical decree. Attention then could have centered on specific problems like the nature and payment of the debt and the endowment of canonical parishes.

Bourget proved the viability of dismemberment. No court cases emerged from it. The Quebec Attorney General stated publicly, undoubtedly for electoral support, that canonical parishes should receive civil registers. Cartier expressed fears that public pressure on the provincial legislature might damage the Sulpician cause. The bishop's enormous popularity was well-established in the city. The Propaganda therefore had adequate guarantees that sooner or later, the government would recognize the parishes.

Unfortunately, the Congregation did not accurately define its position in the conflict. It considered that time and more information would heal all wounds. Taschereau was therefore given a very broad commission as dismemberment entered its fifth year.

CHAPTER V
THE IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION

During Taschereau's mission, dismemberment erupted into an ideological confrontation. Opinions became polarized. The gallicans, as their opponents labelled them, maintained that civil legislation restricted the Church's freedom of action. The self-proclaimed ultramontanes asserted that colonial common law recognized the Church's right to self-government. Intimations of this conflict had appeared in earlier briefs. But, the ideological dimension had not assumed a central position. Nor were the theses articulated so explicitly and systematically.

From this initial clash, the ultramontanes came to believe that the gallicans, who were men of authority and influence, threatened ecclesiastical rights in Canada. They reacted by giving their movement a properly political orientation to consolidate the Church's legal status. The earlier struggle between ultramontaniam and liberalism remained primarily ideological, with only secondary political implications. It was concerned essentially with abstract questions such as the Catholic intellectual's role in French Canadian society and centered on institutions like the Institut Canadien. The conflict with gallicanism,

on the other hand, produced an immediate impact on the electoral and legislative processes. It consecrated the unspectacular and short-lived political vocation of ultramontaniam. The programme catholique, however, was neither a partisan declaration, nor an attempt to form a new Catholic Party. Born out of ideological conflict, it was a clarion call to all bien-pensant politicians to rededicate themselves to orthodox principles.

Taschereau's mission should be situated in this context. His arrival in Montreal roughly coincided with the programme catholique and with the Nouveau Monde's violent attacks on gallican doctrines. The Archbishop was irritated by both occurrences for which he blamed Bourget. In attempting to resolve dismemberment, Taschereau decided to confront the ideological dimension directly. Despite recommendations favorable to his suffragan, the Archbishop's report concluded that dismemberment was illegal. Objectively, therefore, the Taschereau mandate, instead of being a moderating influence, merely aggravated the tense situation.

The second pontifical decree on dismemberment issued on July 25, 1872, seemed to adopt the Archbishop's recommendations in bulk. By appointing Taschereau, the Propaganda lost its wager. Time, the Cardinals hoped, would cool tempers down. Rather, it excited controversy. An indigenous investigation, the Congregation believed, would provide, if nothing else, concise and objective information. Instead, Taschereau upheld one moderate version in the

polemic over Church-State relations.

* * *

J. U. Beaudry's Code des Curés, Marguilliers et Paroissiens and Siméon Pagnuelo's Etudes historiques et légales sur la liberté religieuse en Canada symbolized this ideological controversy. Beaudry's book was essentially a detailed and systematic restatement of arguments he had expounded to the Propaganda. The author pretended to steer a middle course between gallican and ultramontane doctrines. As such, his work pleased neither camp.¹ On the one hand, Beaudry maintained that Canadian jurisprudence regarded purely spiritual questions, including those of ecclesiastical discipline, as outside its competence.² On the other, he affirmed that since the ancien régime, the State legislated in matters of mixed jurisdiction. In one instance, the treatise held that gallican laws were not enforced in the colony because the Quebec Superior Council never registered them. Yet later, Beaudry argued that authors, prohibited by the Church, had influenced the interpretation of law because, for many years, theirs were the only works available to the Canadian jurist.

... Ces écrivains à défaut d'autres, ont fait autorité dans nos cours de justice

1 For gallican reaction, vide E. Lareau, Histoire de la Littérature canadienne. John Lovell (Montreal, 1874), 411-417.

2 B(e)audry, Code. 1-2.

et ont, jusqu'à un certain point, fixé notre jurisprudence, en sorte qu'il ne faudrait rien de moins qu'une législation spéciale pour la changer.³

For Beaudry, these propositions were not contradictory. From the origins of New France, the State regulated the Church's temporal affairs. Laws dealt exclusively with civil recognition of parishes, with tithes, registers, and fabriques. They were introduced with the tacit approval, and often, at the explicit request of the episcopacy. An unwritten agreement evolved between Church and State whereby "... L'Eglise admet cette législation laïque, et ... l'autorité civile protège la religion catholique et lui assure des privilèges et une prépondérance particulière."⁴

Since 1830, the State began to systematize these laws and customs, a process which culminated in the civil code. The Judge admitted that this legislation prevented the Church from fully exercising its power in certain areas. However, the ecclesiastical authorities had tolerated these limitations over the years.⁵ Beaudry hoped that, by his book, "... l'autorité ecclésiastique et civile ... seront plus en état de voir ce qu'il convient (de changer dans la loi), de manière à préserver l'accord et l'union nécessaires à la tranquillité des Catholiques de ce pays."⁶

³ Beaudry, 1-2.

⁴ Beaudry, 5.

⁵ Beaudry, 10.

⁶ Beaudry, Préface, 6.

Pagnuelo's work was conceived as a direct refutation of Beaudry. Its young author, Edmund Barnard's junior partner, participated in many of Bourget's major projects. A frequent contributor and legal advisor to the Nouveau Monde,⁷ he was seriously considered for its editorship late in 1870.⁸ Pagnuelo also ardently championed the Catholic university cause and was an author of the programme catholique. It was Désautels who chose him to rebut Beaudry and who provided him with many of the necessary arguments.⁹

Etudes historiques sought to defend the thesis that the Canadian Church

... est pleinement libre, qu'elle vit de sa vie propre et se gouverne par ses propres règlements.... Cette liberté doit être la clef de l'interprétation qu'il faut donner aux lois civiles qui ont trait à notre organisation ecclésiastique et à toute matière religieuse.¹⁰

To support this contention, Pagnuelo drew from historical and legal examples.

British jurists, he maintained, recognized one fundamental difference between metropolitan and colonial common law. Whereas the mother-country had an established Church, the colonies founded their society on freedom of worship. This principle prevailed in Quebec after the acts of capitulation and the treaty of cession. The qualifying

7 Borthwick, History.

8 ASSH, Papiers Lamarche, Edmund Barnard à Godefroi Lamarche, 28 oct. 1870.

9 ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 2 mars 1872.

10 Pagnuelo, Etudes. Avant-propos.

phrase in the 1763 document, "insofar as the laws of England permit", did not inhibit the full expression of Catholicism in French Canada, as some lawyers alleged. It merely stipulated that the Quebec Church could not become the State religion.¹¹

Pagnuelo borrowed from nationalist historiography, notably from Ferland and Garneau, to show how the Church had, through the years, fought for her freedom of action, as guaranteed in the constitution. While Beaudry attributed this gradual independence to "... les hommes d'Etat en Angleterre, plus libéraux en cela que ceux qui étaient ici chargés de l'administration, (qui) ont fait fléchir la loi anglaise...",¹² Pagnuelo ascribed it primarily to "les entreprises d'une population si brave et si attachée à sa foi."¹³

The Canadian legislature, Pagnuelo contended, finally enshrined this principle in 1851. The bill, which defined the colony's religious constitution, proclaimed the freedom of worship and the equality of religious denominations before the law. Churches in Canada were granted the right to self-government, the only proviso being that they not act in a manner incompatible with peace and order.¹⁴

11 Pagnuelo, 1-22.

12 Beaudry, 3.

13 Pagnuelo, 257.

14 Pagnuelo, 268.

Pagnuelo argued that legislation on religious matters, enacted since the colony's inception, always recognized this principle. Moreover, customs from the ancien régime, judicial decisions, the civil code, and Chapter 19 of the Reformed Statutes of Lower Canada confirmed it. Parishes, from their canonical erection, had the right to hold registers, collect tithes, and form corporations. What, therefore, was the meaning behind their civil recognition? Since 1722, the State officially delimited parish boundaries for civil purposes, that is for creating municipalities and judicial and electoral districts.¹⁵

Cartier and Beaudry's interpretation of this legislation contravened the Church's inalienable right to self-government. It deprived Catholicism of that independence granted to all other religious denominations. It transformed the priest into a public servant. It introduced a repugnant lay and democratic element into ecclesiastical administration. The Church became enslaved to legislators' whims. The effects of Cartier and Beaudry's arguments, therefore, "... sont tout ce qu'il y a de plus gallican..."¹⁶

Beaudry's book appeared in October 1870, eighteen months before Etudes historiques, and had far-reaching consequences. It provoked Bourget who determined to proceed swiftly and vigorously against it. Quite apart from its suspect doctrine, Code des Curés upset the bishop because

15 Pagnuelo, 337-342.

16 Pagnuelo, 346.

once again it dragged dismemberment before the people.¹⁷
 In the immediate, therefore, a public refutation was imperative. At the end of November, Canon Lamarche began his rebuttal in the Nouveau Monde, presumably with Bourget's blessing. The diocesan newspaper continued its acrid criticism well into March of the following year.

These articles dismayed some and horrified others. Even in the bishop's circle, Edmund Barnard considered Lamarche's articles amateurish, confusing, and pointless. He advocated instead a scholarly and systematic rebuttal. By focusing on minutiae, Barnard thought, the Cathedral Canon lost sight of the book's principal aim: to fix jurisprudence on dismemberments and civil registers.¹⁸

By contrast, reaction among some of Bourget's collègues was more dramatic. The Nouveau Monde's polemic anguished the bishop of St-Hyacinthe. Its exaggerated and false principles threatened the harmonious relations between Church and State. "... Les conséquences pourraient nous devenir extrêmement désastreuses, si nos hommes d'Etat se laissaient gouverner par un esprit de représailles! Je les estime trop..."¹⁹ Taschereau concurred. He feared that Beaudry could, if antagonized, greatly harm the Church's position. Instead, the hierarchy could quietly

17 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à Lussier, 2 déc. 1870.

18 ASSH, Papiers Lamarche, Edm. Barnard à Lamarche, 24 nov. 1870. Edm. Barnard à inconnu, 24 nov. 1870.

19 Archives du diocèse de St-Hyacinthe (ADSH), C. Larocque à Cazeau, 15 janv. 1871.

indicate to him the errors of his treatise. With a few corrections, the book would be very useful to the Church.

As the Nouveau Monde pursued its denunciation, Bourget asked Filippo de Angelis to evaluate the Code's doctrine. At the same time, with Laflèche's help, he pushed his provincial colleagues to appoint a mixed commission of ecclesiastics and laymen to produce a learned refutation which the hierarchy would then officially sanction.²⁰ Despite some strong reservations about the Nouveau Monde's new tack, the episcopacy accepted Bourget's plan. The committee included among others, Désautels and Barnard from Montreal, Alfred Désilets from Trois-Rivières, and Edmond Langevin from Rimouski.²¹

The bishops of Montreal and Trois-Rivières believed that a sense of urgency should impel the committee. Rumor was rampant, Laflèche reported, that the legislature would adopt Beaudry's book as the provincial code of parish law. "Le tems est venu de ne plus laisser nos législateurs toucher nos lois d'Eglise sans notre concours et de prendre les mesures nécessaires à cet effet."²² Bourget agreed and noted that in Montreal, "... l'on ne se gêne pas de dire qu'il faut s'opposer aux empiètements des Evêques."²³

20 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à J. Langevin, 13 déc. 1870.

21 Ibid., RLB 19 Bourget à Laflèche, 30 mai 1871. 295.104 Laflèche à Bourget, 4 déc. 1870. RLB 19 Bourget à J. Langevin, 30 déc. 1870.

22 Ibid., 295.104 Laflèche à Bourget, 30 déc. 1870.

23 Archives du Séminaire de Trois Rivières (ASTR), Mgr. Bourget à Laflèche, 6 janv. 1871.

As the months wore on, however, the commission made little progress. Its painstaking pace convinced the bishop of Montreal that the final refutation would be weak and ineffective. The time for action had come.²⁴ Bourget proposed that the committee members from Montreal and Trois Rivières quickly conclude their own work and send it directly to Rome, without awaiting the final document. Since de Angelis had not yet given his official opinion on the Code, this endeavor might gently persuade him to act.²⁵

Pagnuelo's Etudes historiques was the fruit of these initiatives. The Quebec hierarchy disagreed about the merits of the book. Bourget, Laflèche, Langevin, and Adolphe Pinsonnault, former bishop of Sandwich, welcomed it with enthusiasm. Taschereau, Guigues, and Charles Larocque gave it a cooler reception. The Archbishop intimated that the author treated his subject with idealism and dogmatism. "On est exposé à prendre pour vérité absolue ce qui est matière d'opinion ... un avenir qu'on souhaite avec impatience nous empêche compter (sic) avec un passé et un présent hérissés de difficultés."²⁶ He also objected to Pagnuelo's vigorous attacks against Cartier and Beaudry.²⁷

24 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à Laflèche, 30 mai 1871.

25 Ibid., RLB 19 Bourget à Laflèche, 10 mai 1871.

26 Ibid., 901.141 Taschereau à Pagnuelo, 6 mai 1872.

27 Ibid., 901.141 Compte rendu d'une entrevue entre Taschereau et Pagnuelo, Siméon Pagnuelo, 9 mai 1872.

The Code des Curés constituted for Bourget an important State infringement upon ecclesiastical prerogatives. It was not enough to rebut it. The treatise was striking evidence of a dangerous political trend in Canada. Already, the clauses in the new civil code dealing with marriage and the property rights of religious communities admitted practices contrary to Church discipline. At the Vatican Council, Canon de Angelis had recommended legislative amendments to the Quebec hierarchy so that the code could accurately reflect a Catholic nation with a mixed population.²⁸ But when the Code des Curés was published, Bourget considered it imperative to clarify fully the Church's legal position. Since Rome warned bishops against requesting special legislation directly from their parliaments, the task fell to an enlightened laity, concerned with ecclesiastical rights.

The imminence of provincial elections required that men deeply committed to Catholic principles be strongly represented in the new legislature.

Si jamais il fut nécessaire pour l'Eglise
de pouvoir compter absolument sur les hommes
publics c'est bien à la veille de confier
à leurs mains quelques-unes de ces lois
sacrées et sa discipline en partie
Nous espérons que (la Chambre réunira)²⁹
un cercle d'hommes des mieux choisis...

Bourget believed that the programme catholique would

28 ACAM, Opinion de Angelis sur le Code Civil, 1871.

29 ASSH, Papiers Lamarche, Lamarche à inconnu, 31 mai 1871.

put the elections on the right track and elevate the tone of the campaign. It would sensitize the electorate and the candidates to Church rights, paving the way for amendments to the civil code and for legislative action against the Code des Curés.³⁰ The bishop added:

... Je considère ce programme comme la plus forte protection du vrai parti conservateur et le plus ferme appui des bons principes qui doivent gouverner une société chrétienne. Je m'attache à ce principe parce que j'y vois le salut de ma chère patrie qui ne sera véritablement libre qu'en autant que la liberté de l'Eglise y sera respecté...³¹

The document was more a cri de ralliement, than a manifesto for an organized campaign to elect committed Catholics to the legislature. Laflèche considered it noteworthy that opposition to the programme came almost exclusively from the Rouges. "C'est sans doute un signe des tems - et des camps."³² These are the words of a passive, albeit partial, observer, not of an active strategist. Godefroi Lamarche certainly did some recruiting. With Antoine Labelle, he tried unsuccessfully to persuade Edouard de Bellefeuille to run in Terrebonne.³³ But, this was an isolated incident.

Generally the programmistes worked on the available politicians and in the traditional party structure. Thus,

30 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à de Angelis, 12 juin 1871.

31 Ibid., RLB 19 Bourget à Trudel, 6 juin 1871.

32 Ibid., 295.104 Laflèche à Bourget, 12 juin 1871.

33 ASSH, Papiers Lamarche, A. Labelle à Lamarche, 3 fév. 1871.

the pastor of Mascouche and Louis Archambault, provincial minister of Public Works, pressed the local candidate, Onuphre Peltier to subscribe to the programme.³⁴ Similarly, Bourget complied with Chauveau's request to help the Conservative candidate in Châteauguay against Luther Holton.³⁵ However, this support was conditional. La Minerve continued to harass Bourget by supporting Sulpician opposition, defending Beaudry's book, and asserting that the civil code did not need amending. The bishop, therefore, strongly discouraged parish priests from reading it.³⁶

The programme was sufficiently vague to produce a variety of interpretations. The pastor of l'Epiphanie reported that his neighboring colleagues were all working for its success. In the same breath, however, he suggested that programmistes speak to their electors about the economic situation, which especially fascinated the farmers and which would attract them to adopt the programme's principles.³⁷ How many other parish priests had a similar appreciation of the manifesto? Certain groups also found themselves well-served by interpreting the document to suit their own interests. That La Minerve and Le Pays united to denounce the programme as a plot to form a third party was no mere coincidence.

34 ASSH, Papiers Lamarche, P. Bédard à Lamarche, 21 mai 1871.

35 ACAM, 901.119 P. J. O. Chauveau à Bourget, 26 juin 1871.

36 Ibid., RLB 19 Bourget à P. F. Dorval, 15 mai 1871.

37 ASSH, Papiers Lamarche, P. Bédard à Lamarche, 21 mai 1871.

The manifesto widened the chasm separating Bourget and Laflèche from the rest of the hierarchy. Taschereau agreed with La Minerve: the programme would lead to a third party, at Conservative expense and sweep the Liberals into power. The spectre of a Protestant backlash also frightened him.

Bourget's friends, however, only noted the proximity of views between the Archdiocese and the Conservative organs. Basile Routhier, Quebec City editor of the Nouveau Monde, privately reported information confided to him in the capital.

L'Archevêque n'a pas décidé de lui même spontanément, de désavouer le programme catholique.... Langevin, Chauveau et Cauchon ont déterminé son action, en lui représentant que nous voulions diviser le parti conservateur et ruiner son influence, et que nous allions par là les mettre dans l'impossibilité de faire à l'Eglise tout le bien qu'ils désirent si ardamment.³⁸

In the midst of these polemics, Taschereau began his mission as papal investigator. The rift between him and his suffragan was already wide. Tension mounted a few days before the Metropolitan set off for Montreal when he criticized the Nouveau Monde for certain alleged indiscretions. Taschereau urged Bourget to reprimand the editors and to moderate the newspaper's opinions. During the same period, the Archbishop permitted himself to comment on dismemberment. He noted to Charles Larocque

³⁸ ASSH, Papiers Lamarche, A. B. Routhier à Lamarche, 19 juin 1871.

that Bourget had sent him "... une circulaire qui n'annonce guère la disposition d'entrer en accommodement avec les Sulpiciens."³⁹ Already, the scales weighed heavier on one side than on the other.

The bishop of Montreal was dismayed about the Propaganda's decision to appoint a local investigator. Even before learning the candidate's name, Bourget expressed serious reservations about the mission. Whereas in Rome, the dispute could be resolved quietly between the parties directly involved, a local inquiry would deepen antagonisms. Moreover, if one side were favored, the other would undoubtedly again appeal to Rome. Frustrated, Bourget emphasized that he made two trips and spent two years in the holy city, presenting facts and arguments. The Propaganda surely had enough material on hand to reach a conclusive decision.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, when news of the Congregation's appointment reached him, Bourget submitted.

In the first two weeks of May 1871, the bishop with his delegation, which included Désautels and Fabre, and the Sulpician representatives parleyed in Taschereau's presence. The atmosphere was unchanged from the previous year. Both sides resolutely stuck to their positions: canon law versus special status.

Bourget now considered civil recognition to be the

39 APER, SC 1868-71 Taschereau à Larocque, 24 avril 1871.

40 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à de Angelis, 10 mars 1871.

sword which would break the Gordian knot. This procedure, he told Taschereau, would terminate the embarrassments which he suffered from State officials and remove the prop which shielded Sulpician opposition.

Accordingly, the bishop of Montreal began granting the non-Sulpician parishes new decrees of canonical erection as a prelude to civil recognition, despite Désautels' conviction that the move was redundant and would fully vindicate Cartier's pretensions.⁴¹ Bourget believed that sooner or later Sulpician parishes would have to follow the lead set by St-Henri, St-Enfant-Jésus and Notre Dame de Grâce. He foresaw no difficulty in reaching this goal.⁴²

St-Sulpice restated the proposal which Larue presented one year before, but with some interesting clarifications. Baile explained that, while the Seminary intended to cede five parishes to the bishop, all ten would have to revert to annexes until the problems with the State were resolved. The Sulpicians would then assume the costs of civil recognition or at least of obtaining registers for the five parishes. Of course, this plan was predicated on the idea that the Fabrique debt impeded civil erection. Apparently, Taschereau also adopted this opinion after having consulted Cartier on the matter.⁴³

The Seminary demanded that Bourget retract all the

41 ADSJQ, Désautels à Paré, 11 avr. 1871.

42 AGAM, 901.136 Mémoire Bourget concernant le Rescrit Apostolique, 14 avr. 1871.

43 ASSM, Rapport des entrevues en présence de Mgr. Taschereau entre Mgr. Bourget et MM. les Sulpiciens, mai 1871.

slanderous accusations contained in his Roman briefs. His intimation that the Sulpicians had rebelled against the Holy See by appealing the partition of Notre Dame particularly wounded them. Rome, they affirmed, neither ordered dismemberment, nor specified the procedure to be followed. Therefore, they could challenge Bourget in all conscience, without disobeying the Pope.⁴⁴ Other odious innuendos, especially that the Sulpicians were contaminated with gallicanism and that they tried to buy the support of certain Canadian bishops, would have to be withdrawn.

The Seminary also required that Bourget fully respect its property rights. The Sulpicians indignantly complained that the pastor of Notre Dame de Grâce built a presbytery on their land, took possession of their two sacristies and appropriated tithes, stole fees, and bench rents, monies which belonged to them by right.⁴⁵ St-Sulpice fully intended to protest against all such future encroachments.

At this juncture, the Sulpician maverick, Antoine Giband, tried to evaluate the Seminary's strategy for the Propaganda.

Sachez que toutes les difficultés, soulevées par le Séminaire contre le démembrement s'évanouiront le jour où il ne croira plus l'autorité de son Supérieur en danger. C'est là pour lui le point capital vers la protection duquel convergent toutes ses batteries.

Giband assured the Congregation that, as long as St-Sulpice

⁴⁴ ACAM, 355.101 Baile à Taschereau, supplément explicatif, 22 avr. 1871.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 335.123 Baile à Bourget, 14 mars 1871.

felt that the Superior's authority was endangered, they would deploy every means within the strictest legal bounds to oppose the bishop.

The Sulpician believed that his Order was exhausting itself by assuming the cure of six parishes. The Superior General in Paris had often urged the Seminary to reduce its pastoral load. Unfortunately, his advice went unheeded. But, circumstances militated against St-Sulpice. The number of priests was no longer sufficient to meet the task. They were so dispersed throughout the city that the Superior's authority in fact was declining. Why did the Seminary then insist on caring for the entire city?

Le Séminaire a pour principe et habitude d'être essentiellement conservateur, traditionaliste, amateur du statu quo et de ne céder qu'à la force des choses quand il faut innover.⁴⁶

How did Giband propose to resolve this thorny problem? The Seminary, he believed, would have to abandon additional parishes within the city and suburbs. He was probably referring here to St-Ann, St-Joseph, and Ste-Brigide. The bishop would then leave to the Sulpicians the rest of the city which would form one parish with their Superior as pastor. Giband considered that Bourget would accept this proposal, but was not so convinced about St-Sulpice. He therefore intimated that Rome would have to pressure the Seminary to restrict its parochial duties.

⁴⁶ ACAM, SC 1868-71 Giband à Barnabò, 25 août 1871.

Bourget's reaction to the Seminary's position was predictable. "Vous avez vu," commented Baile, "... avec quelle énergie Mgr. de Montréal a rejeté la proposition du Séminaire...."⁴⁷ The bishop also refused to retract his accusations. To do so would be acknowledging that Sulpician complaints were well-founded. He did, however, admit the Seminary's right to appeal to Rome.⁴⁸ Bourget then countered allegations about his violating property rights. The Propaganda, he asserted, granted the bishop the use of existing churches and chapels for parish purposes. How could it then have denied his priests the most elementary facilities to fulfill their obligations? Pastors needed to live on church grounds and to have enough money for their material and their parishioners' spiritual requirements. Yet, St-Sulpice ordered the curé of Notre Dame de Grâce to leave the presbytery which was built in part with the inhabitants' contributions. The Seminary also claimed his revenue. Canon law, however, viewed this income as a benefice and by rejecting the duties connected with it, the Sulpicians forfeited their right.⁴⁹

Conciliation again aborted. The parties consequently awaited Taschereau's report. In the meantime, Bourget left nothing to fate. He sent all the documents concerning the

47 ACAM, SOCG (juil. 1872) Baile à Taschereau, 10 mai 1871.

48 ASSM, Rapport des Entrevues entre Bourget et St-Sulpice, mai 1871.

49 ACAM, 901.137 Bourget à Taschereau, 2 juin 1871.

Archbishop's mission to de Angelis, "afin que vous puissiez avoir en mains toutes les preuves ... nécessaires pour faire triompher la cause que vous ... vous chargez de défendre."⁵⁰

During Taschereau's visit to Montreal and throughout the summer, Bourget's lawyers and the Fabrique argued, in briefs submitted to the Archbishop, about the character and size of the debt. Anselme Trudel, Benjamin de Montigny, and Louis-Olivier Taillon presented the bishop's case. The first of these had impeccable Catholic credentials. Dr. E. H. Trudel's nephew came from a well-established French Canadian family with solid religious ties.⁵¹ President of the Union Catholique and the Cercle Littéraire in the 'sixties, he had prepared a blue-print for the union of all Catholic literary and scientific associations in Montreal to counteract the Institut Canadien's influence.⁵² He was also a member of the Zouave organization committee and contributed to the Nouveau Monde. In 1870, the "Grand Vicaire", as his opponents christened him, eloquently defended the Fabrique against Guibord's widow and received accolades from Roman canonists, including de Angelis. Trudel expanded his remarks in Revue Canadienne under the title, "Quelques considérations sur les rapports de l'Eglise et de l'Etat". The programme was elected provincially in 1871 for Champlain county.⁵³

50 ACAM, 901.137 Bourget à de Angelis, 12 juin 1871.

51 L. O. David, Souvenirs et Biographies. 1870-1910. Beachemin (Montréal, 1911), 55.

52 Desjardins, ref. 272-273.

53 Borthwick, History.

Montigny joined the Zouave movement in 1861 and, ten years later, founded a veterans' association l'Union Allet. Trudel, Taillon and he all worked on the programme catholique. Trudel, however, overshadowed his colleagues. They assumed a position of relative importance in the bishop's undertakings only because of their legal partnership with the Grand Vicaire.

The debate revolved around who should be responsible for the debt. The outcome determined whether these financial commitments could inhibit civil recognition. Bourget's lawyers argued that the burden should fall primarily on the Seminary. Only the original parish debt, contracted by judicial authorization to build Notre Dame, bound the inhabitants of Montreal. But, it was inconceivable that this loan had not been repaid after fifty years.

The Fabrique had incurred the extant debt for purposes other than those stipulated by law. Parishioners could not, therefore, be made to pay it. To support their contentions, the bishop's attorneys cited the Fabrique report of 1854 which indicated that the debt rose so sharply due to various projects, the costs of which far exceeded original estimates, to unforeseen expenses, and to the building of various churches. In taking on these responsibilities, church wardens expected, not unreasonably, that St-Sulpice would help them out.

The Seminary recognized its commitments by signing a convention with the Church Council in 1854. The former

assumed the debt in return for the latter's annual revenue. At the same time, the contracting parties decided to reduce the Church Council's obligations to \$200,000. In the intervening years, Notre Dame's wardens should have turned over enough money to acquit the debt.⁵⁴ However, this did not appear to be the case. The bishop's counsels accordingly demanded a full investigation of the accounts.

The Fabrique's lawyers, Beaudry, Cartier, Pominville and Bétournay argued that the debt bound the entire parish because it was contracted for Notre Dame and in its name. They rejected as excessive the distinction between a church council and a parish debt. Montrealers had expressed themselves clearly in the original petition to Mgr. Plessis which requested that Notre Dame be built. By this act, they assumed the ensuing financial burden. Therefore, canon and civil law recognized this debt as one belonging wholly to the parish. As for the Fabrique's other obligations, government statutes held parishioners accountable for them, with or without their consent.

The Fabrique's solicitors questioned the nature of the 1854 agreement. In the absence of an explicit notarized document, they did not consider it legally binding on the Seminary. It was merely an informal convention to which a few Sulpicians subscribed. By it, the debt was transported to St-Sulpice, but not extinguished. In

⁵⁴ ACAM, 901.141 Remarques sur la dette de Fabrique, Trudel et de Montigny, avec l'adhésion de Cherrier, mai 1871.

effect, the Fabrique changed creditors and was relieved of interest payments.

Beaudry refused comment on the figures cited by Bourget's lawyers. He added that if their allegations were correct, the Church Council and the Seminary would be guilty of fraud and collusion.⁵⁵

Three expedients, varying in effectiveness, could break Bourget's stalemate with the Sulpicians: civil registers, State recognition, or amendments to parish law. All three came into play while Taschereau was writing his report for the Propaganda. In October 1871, Bourget and Langevin requested theologians at the Séminaire de Québec and Grand Vicar Edmond Langevin to offer their opinions on controversial parish matters. These reports were intended to guide the episcopacy in proposing to the government certain amendments on ecclesiastical legislation.

In its brief, the Séminaire de Québec generally enunciated Cartier and Beaudry's theses. The theologians believed that, notwithstanding the ecclesiastical character of the parish, civil recognition had been mandatory from the early days of the colony. The order-in-council of 1722 formally acknowledged existing parishes, except for Notre Dame de Québec. By virtue of this decree, the State confirmed all subsequent canonical erections. This ordonnance, however, failed to mention certain parishes

⁵⁵ ASSM, Mémoire de la Fabrique en réponse à l'Evêque de Montréal, 26 juil. 1871.

within the walls of Quebec City and outside the island of Montreal. Were they then not recognized civilly? "...Elles avaient, sans doute, reçu antérieurement l'approbation civile." After the Conquest, the Quebec Legislative Council adopted a statute confirming this custom. Thus, "la paroisse ecclésiastique, comme paroisse, n'existe pas au civil...."

Canonical parishes had no title to civil registers, nor could they establish church councils. Their only prerogative was the tithe. Pastors could certainly hold ecclesiastical records, but the State would not admit these as proof of civil status.

The theologians further affirmed that the courts never officially decided who held legal title to Fabrique property. French jurisprudence considered these holdings to be ecclesiastical. Certain Canadian legal experts believed that the parishioners were its rightful owners. The Séminaire did not presume, therefore, to adjudicate on this matter.

Finally, the professors believed that Quebec's Church legislation did not inhibit Catholicism "... puisque tout s'est réglé le plus souvent de l'autorité religieuse dans notre pays."⁵⁶ Consequently, they considered it inopportune to propose amendments to the government. The initiative might seriously perturb relations between Church and State.

Edmond Langevin, on the other hand, seemed to adopt Bourget's theses. He maintained that the State admitted

⁵⁶ ACAM, 752.706 Réponses de quelques théologiens de Québec, oct. 1871.

the ecclesiastical nature of the parish. The 1827 select committee report of the Legislative Assembly of Lower Canada and Beaudry's Code proved his contention. True parishes could be established by canonical erections alone. Civil recognition added nothing to their essence.

Quant aux registres de l'Etat civil, tous les curés et missionnaires qui en ont demandé aux officiers civils chargés de les authentifier n'ont jamais ci-devant éprouvé de refus.⁵⁷

That very year court clerks authenticated registers which canonical pastors in the diocese of Rimouski presented to them.

The Grand Vicar viewed the fabrique as a fundamentally ecclesiastical institution. Episcopal authority defined its functions and authorized its existence. The government merely confirmed the bishop's prerogatives. Fabrique property belonged to the Church. Parishioners therefore had no legal title to it.

As a result of these briefs and of a special committee study, the hierarchy decided to propose amendments on government legislation. Parishes established by canonical erection alone, they proposed, would be entitled to tithes, civil registers, and a fabrique. A church council's debt would not constitute a valid obstacle to dismemberment. Finally, a set of resolutions dealing with the marriage clauses of the civil code were adopted.

⁵⁷ ACAM, 752.706 Réponses de Edmond Langevin, Grand Vicaire, oct. 1871.

Meanwhile, the commissioners appointed by the State, began proceedings in the early summer for the civil recognition of three non-Sulpician parishes. Taschereau asked Bourget to keep him abreast of developments because "... si cela réussit nous aurons la solution authentique des difficultés les plus embarrassantes."⁵⁸ Désautels chose Trudel and Taillon to defend the three canonical pastors.⁵⁹ These lawyers consulted with C. S. Cherrier to lay out legal strategy.⁶⁰ Two legal actions, however, suddenly suspended the deliberations. The pastor and trustees of Notre Dame took out a writ of certiorari in Superior Court. They alleged that the civil commissioners did not have the power to decide upon the Fabrique's debt. At the same time, some private parishioners filed a writ of quo warranto, to annul the investigators' appointment, charging conflict of interest. These cases, victims of the cumbersome judicial process, dragged on into the autumn and winter. Not until late April 1872, did Judge Berthelot dismiss the certiorari which allowed the commissioners to resume their investigation.

The Fabrique's apparent strategy was to protract these legal wrangles until Bourget, who was seriously ill throughout 1872, died. Désautels at least subscribed to this theory, citing as evidence a confidential conversation which

58 ACAM, 901.137 Taschereau à Bourget, 7 juin 1871.

59 Ibid., 901.079 Paré à Bourget, 27 juin 1871.

60 Ibid., 901.061 Bourget à Paré, 19 juin 1871.

purportedly took place between a commissioner and a trustee from Notre Dame. The Sulpicians allegedly informed the latter "que toutes les mesures sont prises, tant avec les autorités du pays qu'avec les hommes influents ... à Rome ... dans le but de diviser, advenant la mort de Mgr. Bourget, le Diocèse de Montréal en trois Diocèses ... De plus ... on ferait nommer alors un Sulpicien au Siège de Montréal - lequel Siège le Séminaire ... se chargerait de doter."⁶¹ Cartier supposedly wanted to grant the northern diocese to Stanislas Tassé, a noted Conservative partisan favorable to Laval; the southern, to Baudry, a native of Quebec City; and reserve the island diocese for his friend, Charles Larocque, or a Sulpician.⁶² In transmitting this information to Taschereau, Bourget stated that he was asking the Propaganda to name an auxiliary bishop with right of succession.⁶³ The bishop believed that, in this way, he could protect the new order.

With the federal elections approaching, the question of civil registers arose again. Blame for inaction shuttled between the politicians and the public servants. Ouimet professed the government's good intentions. Both he and the Solicitor-General thought that any doubts about the canonical pastor's right to civil registers should be

61 ADSJQ, Désautels à Paré, 25 mars 1872.

62 Ibid., Désautels à Paré, 27 mai 1872.

63 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à Taschereau, 27 mars 1872.

resolved in the bishop's favor. The chief prothonotary, however, prevented this from happening.⁶⁴ Hubert, on the other hand, affirmed that he could not unilaterally disavow his 1866 decision. A formal order from Superior Court was needed, which Ouimet could easily obtain if he wanted. But, Hubert hinted, perhaps the Attorney General's close contact with Rousselot dampened his resolve.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, Senator J. L. Armand, one of the civil commissioners, assured Paré that the provincial government would legislate an end to the impasse.⁶⁶ Paré replied that he had heard similar pledges before particularly at election time. "Plaise à Dieu qu'il n'en soit pas ainsi dans cette circonstance, car c'est toujours pénible de traiter d'affaires avec des hommes sur les quels (sic) on ne peut pas surement compter."⁶⁷ Armand felt compelled to vindicate his political leaders. He guaranteed that Ouimet would introduce legislation definitively settling the controversy, whether or not Rousselot agreed. Should the Attorney General encounter resistance in the Cabinet, he would resign.⁶⁸

Since May 1871, the diocese of Montreal did not have a representative in Rome. Of course, de Angelis generally

64 ACAM, 752.704 G. Ouimet à A. Labelle, 1 mars 1872.

65 Ibid., 355.124 Lapierre à Paré, 17 avr. 1872.

66 Ibid., 571.000 J. L. Armand à Paré, 13 avr. 1872.

67 Ibid., RLB 19 Paré à Armand, 19 avr. 1872.

68 Ibid., 571.000 J. L. Armand à Paré, 22 avr. 1872.

attended to Bourget's interests. But, as Désautels observed, the canonist was not conversant enough with Canadian affairs to perform his task optimally. Nor did the bishop pay him sufficiently to spur on his zeal.⁶⁹

The pastor of Varennes argued that with Taschereau's report arriving in Rome, Bourget would need a permanent representative in the holy city with extensive knowledge of Canadian problems. This agent could with de Angelis' help secure a positive decision from the Holy See.⁷⁰ The prelate finally saw the wisdom of such reasoning and informed Taschereau that he was despatching Désautels to Rome. The curé set sail from Portland with a petition from the Montreal area clergy supporting their bishop.

At the same time, the Sulpicians sent their own representatives, Rousselot and Larue, to the Holy See. They were distressed by the truculent and widespread opposition which surrounded them. A meeting of non-Sulpician pastors had recently condemned the Seminary's obstructionism and its blatant use of political pressure and popular passion to achieve its objectives. The Nouveau Monde, and particularly Godefroi Lamarche, ruthlessly exploited Bourget's briefs to lash out at the "Opposition". Finally, Alphonse Villeneuve, former Christian brother, former private tutor-turned-seminarian, published in instalments from December

69 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 12 janv. 1872.

70 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Paré, 12 janv. 1872.

1871 his outrageous satire, Comédie Infernale, in which the Sulpicians appeared as Beelzebub's allies. Baile refused to tolerate such defamatory tactics.⁷¹

Taschereau commiserated fully. He urged Bourget to disavow the Comédie.⁷² The latter protested that he had nothing to do with its publication. Villeneuve, he asserted, neither consulted the bishop, nor obtained material from the episcopal palace. Besides, the book was doctrinally sound and factually indisputable.⁷³ "... Beaucoup de gens en lisant cet ouvrage, ouvrent les yeux et sont surpris d'apercevoir tant de profondeurs dans les démêlés du Séminaire avec les Evêques."⁷⁴ Consequently, Bourget refused to censure the work and resolved instead to give Villeneuve minor orders, fully aware of the criticism which would befall him.

In Rome, Désautels mounted a vast operation against Bourget's opponents. On an ideological level, he submitted Code des Curés to de Angelis for an eventual condemnation by the Index.⁷⁵ He also tried to secure official approval of Etudes historiques.

In addition, Bourget's envoy sought to personally

71 AAQ, DM F-55 Baile à Taschereau, 27 mai 1872.

72 ACAM, 295.101 Taschereau à Bourget, 24 juin 1872.

73 Ibid., 901.061 Bourget à Désautels, 14 juin 1872.

74 Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Désautels, 19 juil. 1872.

75 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à de Angelis, 20 juin 1872.

discredited the bishop's adversaries. He asked Paré to send him signed testimonies showing what the Fabrique's real motives were in resisting civil recognition: to await Bourget's death in order to dismember the diocese. He also invited documents establishing Cartier's involvement in these machinations.⁷⁶ The news that Taschereau requested judicial officials to cancel a forthcoming decision on civil registers prompted a demand for further affidavits. The Archbishop's action, Désautels believed, was very revealing.

C'est bien l'esprit de l'entourage de l'Archevêque. L'on voudrait ... prouver aux niais que la thèse de (Bourget) est fausse et, en même temps enfoncer d'un seul coup l'Evêque de Montréal. Ce serait, à la vérité sacrifier les intérêts de l'Eglise mais il paraît que quand les gallicans sont une fois lancés, ils ne reculent pas devant les moyens.⁷⁷

Relying on information provided by the pastor of Pointe Lévis, Désautels wanted to prove that the Archbishop blindly followed the opinions of his brother, Superior Court Judge, Jean-Thomas Taschereau, who was himself hostile to the Church.⁷⁸ Bourget's agent did not spare the other bishops whom he denounced to the Propaganda for their compliance with "les exigences injustes de ces politiques ... (Ils) ont cru et croient encore voir dans l'attitude constante de l'Evêque de Montréal et de son clergé une condamnation de leur propre conduite."⁷⁹

76 ADSJQ, Désautels à Paré, 27 mai 1872.

77 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 23 juin 1872.

78 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 23 juin 1872.

79 Ibid., RCD 41, Mémoire Désautels à Barnabò, 8 juil. 1872.

Désautels also attempted to outdistance his opponents by getting access to secret documents from the Propaganda. Canon de Angelis was his source. In early July, the pastor of Varennes divulged the essence of the Archbishop's report to Bourget. A few days later, he obtained a full copy of the relation. Désautels found it to be "un long plaidoyer en faveur de MM. les Sulpiciens. Personne n'a encore aussi fortement plaidé leur cause. D'après ces Rapports toutes les chances sont pour le Séminaire..." Whatever the outcome in Rome, however, he urged Bourget not to act without first consulting him. The bishop's sympathizers in the holy city, he maintained, knew better than anyone in Canada, what should be accepted and rejected in the new decree. He demanded absolute secrecy from the Cathedral Chapter.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, de Angelis tried, though unsuccessfully, to preview the Cardinals' decision.⁸¹

Désautels now sought to secure for the see of Montreal a successor who would pursue Bourget's policies. Dis-memberment was clearly subordinate to this goal. "Si nous perdons quelque chose avec les Sulpiciens ... il y aura moyen de se rattrapper dans la nomination du coadjuteur... (qui sera) notre dernière planche de salut."⁸²

The astute envoy realized that the hierarchy would have to approve the candidate. This disqualified all Bourget's

80 ACAM, RCD 41 Désautels à Bourget, 15 juil. 1872.

81 Ibid., 752.705 Z. Zitelli à de Angelis, 16 juil. 1872.

82 Ibid., RCD 41 Désautels à Bourget, 15 juil. 1872.

creatures in the Cathedral Chapter. He therefore proposed men not directly involved in the bishop's controversies, but who were doctrinally sound enough to continue in his footsteps. His first choice was Jean Langevin or his brother Edmond.⁸³ Certainly, the Quebec episcopacy would endorse this selection without delay.

In defending his cause, the pastor of Varennes stressed the need for a successor in Bourget's tradition, not to preserve any single project or institution, but to support a whole way of being in the province of Quebec.

.... J'ai le bonheur de constater ...
l'existence d'une école qui n'enseigne ...
(que) les saines doctrines romaines, un
parti ... Catholique ... Ultramontain. Ce
parti ... le plus nombreux, se recrute surtout
dans la Cité de Montréal, la plus importante
et la plus peuplée ... de l'Amérique
Britannique du Nord.... C'est particulière-
ment parmi les Avocats, les Notaires et les
Médecins ... qu'il compte le plus grand nombre
de membres importants. C'est par des
représentants choisis dans les rangs de ces
hommes instruits et dévoués à l'Eglise, que
les véritables catholiques voient leurs
intérêts défendus au Parlement et devant
les Tribunaux....⁸⁴

What would happen to this devoted élite if Bourget's successor did not share his ideas about Church-State relations?

Even before Désautels' arrival in Rome, the Propaganda was digesting Taschereau's report and formulating a new decree. The Archbishop's relation consisted in two main

83 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 25 juin 1872.

84 Ibid., RCD 41 Mémoire Désautels à Barnabò, 8 juil. 1872.

parts. The first, written in November 1871, dealt with the Seminary's objections to dismemberment. The second, in May 1872, mostly answered the Congregation's questions on property rights.

Essentially, Taschereau believed that, in view of the enormous population increase in Montreal, dismemberment was an absolute necessity. He also approved Bourget's method, but added that the bishop should attend to two considerations: the requirements of civil law; the Sulpician community's constitution.

The Archbishop maintained that Bourget did not comply with the legal prerequisites for civil dismemberment in Montreal. Parishioners generally disapproved of his operations in 1865. While the bishop had recovered his losses since then in non-Sulpician parishes, the faithful living within the Seminary's territory still opposed the new order.

On the complex question of the debt, the papal investigator noted that prominent legal opinion was divided about the validity of Bourget's distinction between a parish and a fabrique debt. He himself considered that such a dichotomy would unleash interminable controversies. To decide the issue formally, the Quebec Church either could ask the courts to define the nature of the debt, or have parliament amend the existing legislation. Taschereau, however, preferred that the Propaganda circumvent this problem altogether. By creating church-annexes, with

defined borders and de facto pastors, the problem would easily be resolved. The State would grant them registers immediately and civil recognition, eventually. The parish in Quebec City had adopted this effective expedient over the years, always shunning dismemberment because of the fabrique debt.

This policy would also meet with the approval of the Seminary which expressly requested that its parishes be made into annexes to protect the integrity of the Order. In addition, though, it might resolve the wrangle over property rights in non-Sulpician areas. Because presbyteries and sacristies were adjuncts of the church, Bourget claimed them for his canonical pastors. Taschereau, however, doubted this title, but felt that the Seminary would concede it if the Holy See granted annexes.

Whatever Rome's decision, the Archbishop recommended that, in the interests of peace and dignity, the Pope exhort the Seminary to relinquish claims over churches, sacristies, and presbyteries outside its territory. These properties could be administered either by de facto church wardens or by agents of Notre Dame's Fabrique. As a measure of appeasement, Pius IX should specifically declare that Sulpician objections to Bourget's confiscations were justified. Taschereau also proposed that a tax be imposed on parish buildings to help pay that portion of the debt contracted for all parishioners: the cemetery and the construction and upkeep of Notre Dame. Should

Bourget perform future dismemberments within Sulpician territory, as was his prerogative, the Propaganda itself should decide on property rights.

Taschereau agreed with Fabrique lawyers that civil law did not require specific obligations from the Seminary. Rome should urge Bourget to admit this. If the Propaganda considered that the Sulpicians had particular spiritual commitments to Montreal, difficulties still remained. Arguments would inevitably erupt over their nature and extent. Taschereau noted that St-Sulpice already bore a heavy debt and agreed to liquidate the Fabrique's financial obligations. The Seminary supported charitable works in the city, which could not be abandoned. The Archbishop wondered whether the Propaganda should add to these burdens.

Concerning the Irish, Taschereau argued that dismemberment broke their bond of unity. To restore it, he proposed that St-Patrick should be designated the main Irish church. St-Bridget and St-Ann would both serve the English-speaking community exclusively but would be dependent upon St-Patrick's pastor.

Finally, the Archbishop suggested that the actual pastor of Notre Dame, rather than the Sulpician Superior, be confirmed as Fabrique chairman. He vindicated Sulpician objections to newspaper and other conspicuous attacks against the Order. The Propaganda should encourage Bourget to avow publicly that St-Sulpice did not rebel against the Holy See

by opposing dismemberment.⁸⁵

The Congregation integrated all of Taschereau's recommendations into the new decree, with a few minor modifications. It refused to include any pronouncement, favorable or otherwise, to either party. St-Patrick was designated for exclusive Irish use, but its territory was not made coterminous with that of Notre Dame. Nor was it given precedence over the other two English places of worship. Bourget would determine which parish church the Francophones of St-Patrick and St-Ann would attend. The decree also stipulated that agents appointed by the Fabrique and approved by the bishop would administer parish property in the annexes. Finally, as long as Notre Dame's debt existed, the cemetery would be common to all parishioners of the city. The Fabrique would enjoy unrestricted rights over burial dues.⁸⁶

At the end of July 1872, Désautels was in a profoundly pessimistic mood. On two main fronts, prospects were at their bleakest. Rumor had it that the pontifical decree would totally destroy Bourget's accomplishments. Also, the Quebec bishops apparently wanted to await their colleague's death and then divide the diocese, rather than grant him a successor. Something had to be saved from this impending catastrophe. He pushed Bourget to write to his confreres, announcing his resignation and proposing the candidates

85 ACAM, 901.141 Relatio quam facit Archiepiscopus Quebecensis, 1872.

86 APFR, Acta (juillet 1872), décret signé Barnabò, 26 juil. 1872.

whom Désautels recommended as successors.

En effet un successeur, quelqu'il soit, sera toujours un grand intérêt à ne pas trop laisser morceller son Diocèse et ne devra pas aimer à laisser détruire son autorité par les Sulpiciens.⁸⁷

If the bishop did not act on this advice, Désautels felt that his Roman mission was over. There still remained, however, one glimmer of hope in this darkest hour: civil recognition.⁸⁸

* * *

To appreciate fully Taschereau's report, one must situate it within the context of contemporaneous events. First, Rome mandated the Archbishop to work at establishing concord among the antagonists. If this were not possible, he was asked to answer some key questions. Could civil recognition be achieved? If so, how? Could an understanding be reached with the State about the Fabrique's debt?⁸⁹ Obviously, the Propaganda wanted above all to resolve the civil problems which dismemberment caused.

As Taschereau carried out his investigation, attempts were made to iron out these difficulties. At the request of parishioners, Bourget began civil recognition procedures which subsequently became entangled in legal manoeuvres.

87 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 25 juil. 1872.

88 Ibid., RCD 41 Désautels à Truteau, 26 juil. 1872.

89 Ibid., 901.136 Rescrit à Mgr. Taschereau, 8 mars 1871.

But, before the Archbishop forwarded his second report in May 1872, Judge Berthelot had dismissed the quo warranto. The civil commissioners, whom the government appointed with a view to pleasing the local bishop, could resume their inquiry. State recognition was therefore imminent.

Another initiative to resolve civil difficulties occurred at the episcopal meeting in October 1871, that is one month before Taschereau forwarded his first report. The bishops made a series of proposals which removed all obstacles to dismemberment. In May 1872, the provincial premier, Chauveau, and Ouimet agreed, not without reluctance, to introduce these suggested amendments at the following session of the legislature. If Taschereau harbored any doubts about the success of the civil commissioners' deliberations, he had none concerning the Quebec government's intentions.⁹⁰ Yet, he persisted in asserting that dismemberment still encountered grave legal problems. His report refused to envisage legislative amendment as a means to dispell the problems created by the Fabrique debt, for fear of arousing controversy. In the same breath, however, he admitted the dichotomy between a parish and fabrique debt, since the inhabitants were asked to pay a tax on projects common to all. The Archbishop, therefore, deliberately confronted the legality of dismemberment, even though he could have

⁹⁰ ACAM., 280.001 Assemblée des Evêques tenue le 10 au 12 mai 1872.

answered the Propaganda's questions without doing so.

Taschereau probably took that path to conciliate the Sulpicians. If the initiatives which Bourget and his colleagues undertook were successful, the Seminary's parishes would have to seek civil recognition. This would further weaken the Superior's authority over his curates and the Order's community spirit, not to mention the Seminary's property rights. The Fabrique would also have to bear an enormous debt alone, without help from the new parishes. To avoid this fate, the Seminary proposed a plan in 1870, terming a sine qua non for negotiating with the bishop.

Taschereau was in the grips of a dilemma. Should he answer the Propaganda's queries in light of contemporaneous events, the Seminary would be broken, bitterly resentful, and very isolated. Should he adopt its blueprint as a basis for concord, St-Sulpice could be persuaded, gently or otherwise, to make further concessions to the bishop, especially on property rights. In this context, it is very revealing that the structure of the Archbishop's report was modelled on Sulpician objections to dismemberment. It did not discuss at all the real wrongs which the bishop suffered since 1865. To win over the Seminary, Taschereau suggested creating church-annexes. Arguments from civil law added weight to this recommendation. By doing so, the papal legate profoundly alienated the bishop, despite some very generous concessions to him.

Bourget, though, could hardly submit to the Archbishop's

proposals after holding ecclesiastical registers for four years; after the Attorney General assured him that civil registers, to which he was rightfully entitled, would soon be granted by judicial order; after following through with arduous procedures for civil recognition. All these initiatives would shortly bear fruit. How could he turn the clock back to 1864?

Taschereau merely added fuel to the ideological fire which raged in an important segment of Quebec public opinion. Two schools confronted each other over Catholicism's right to self-government in Canada. To delimit these camps by the words "gallican" and "ultramontane" is misleading. The first party contained as many proponents of papal infallibility, centralization of authority, the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal, of the clergy over the laity, as many anti-liberals as the second. Correspondingly, at no time, in this debate, did Bourget's camp advocate a theocracy or the entrenchment of Rome in Canada. They demanded that the Church govern itself according to its own discipline, invoking legislation which granted freedom of worship and equality to all religious denominations. To designate the two schools as liberal and conservative Catholics is equally confusing. The "ultramontanes" were much more aware of the separateness of Church and State than their "liberal" counterparts. They wanted legislation which would reflect the character of their province, a Catholic state with a mixed population. The words

"liberal" and "conservative" Catholic referred to a context foreign to Canadian soil. They were convenient tools to delimit adversaries in an ideological confrontation and were used as loosely as our contemporary epithets. But, they did not translate a reality, in fact they obscured it.

By dismembering Notre Dame, Bourget encountered a fact of French Canadian life: the symbiotic relationship between clergy and politicians. The Sulpicians, long-time undisputed masters of Montreal, had forged close links with those in power. The bishop of this city was by contrast a relative newcomer whose political influence was subordinate to that of the Seminary. Thus, when he undertook a simple canonical procedure which threatened the Sulpicians' privileged position, Bourget also encountered the resistance of their powerful allies. He discovered that by identifying itself too closely with politicians, the Church could inhibit its rights. He therefore determined to proceed against this system. In this endeavor, the bishop could hardly count on the support of his colleagues. They had drawn immense benefits from their political contacts. He therefore turned to an enlightened laity. The struggle in the Quebec Church was fundamentally between Establishment and anti-establishment elements. One faction was élitist, the other, more inclined to seek the support of the public. The issue was essentially how much distance should the clergy take from politicians to preserve the Church's integrity and its rights. The conflict, however, had

another dimension.

The Church formed an essential element in French Canadian identity. The milieu spurned those who were not at least nominally Catholic.

The debate about the Church's right to self-government coincided with Confederation, which provoked feelings of insecurity among certain elements of French Canada. In fact, Cartier had to reassure his compatriots about their future rights by enunciating LaFontaine's solidarity principle: Unity would always triumph over diversity. But, almost immediately, the same Cartier and his colleague Beaudry showed the tenuousness of the Church's legal status in Canada.

The reaction was quick and emphatic. The programme catholique merely applied Cartier's principle of solidarity to the provincial and federal legislatures. It sought to elect enough committed Catholics to guarantee passage of any legislation involving Catholic principles. The mechanism, predicated on the concept that the legislature controlled the executive, not vice versa, proved fairly effective in the New Brunswick Schools debate in 1872. The programmiste movement seemed to be relatively bipartisan since Pagnuelo, one of its leaders, sympathized with the parti national.⁹¹ In fact, the programme used the term "conservative" in a broad philosophical sense and

91 ACAM, RCD 41 Désautels à Pagnuelo, 20 juin 1872.

"parti" in its original generic meaning.

Pagnuelo's Etudes also sought to counteract Cartier's theses. The reader cannot escape the strong nationalist strain in the book, as in the programme. His historical and legal interpretations proved not only the Church's freedom, but French Canada's uninhibited right to organize itself according to its own principles. References to Ferland and Garneau were no mere coincidences. Pagnuelo, Trudel, Desjardins, Taillon, and de Montigny belonged to a post-Rebellion generation. They had not experienced the constraints placed on nationalist ideology in 1837.

Those who defended the Church's rights were in reality advancing French Canadian nationalism. Bourget himself was not a nationalist. He, like Taschereau, was a man of the Church. The one sought to protect the institution from political encroachments. The other, to preserve its privileged civil status from the exaggerated pretensions of certain prelates. But, their actions created a historical impact transcending their own intentions, indeed their own consciousness. They were men of their time and, therefore, subject to its influences.

Bourget was no more a politician, than an ideologue. Circumstance, however, dictated that the issues to which he was committed became political. Dismemberment, the civil code, New Brunswick Schools, all involved Church rights and, as such, intimately concerned the bishop. He therefore tried to lobby for favorable legislation. However,

Je suis invariablement cette règle que m'impose la charge pastorale... d'enseigner les principes qui doivent diriger les électeurs, pour remplir un devoir de conscience; mais je m'abstiens scrupuleusement de dire à qui que ce soit: votez pour ou contre tel personnage.⁹²

Bourget always enjoined his clergy to do likewise, never to apply principles to individuals. That task belonged to the electorate. Some highly partisan priests and the diocesan press, however, did stray into the realm of personality. Likewise, opportunists donned the clerical mantle to solicit electoral support. Bourget's antagonists, therefore, considered him a hypocrite. Some of his actions reinforced these impressions. How could the bishop personally express profound regrets at Cartier's defeat in 1872, when the Nouveau Monde excoriated the minister's traitorous stand on New Brunswick schools? These were not the actions of a hypocrite, though, but of an apolitical churchman.

92 ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à L. Archambault, 15 juil. 1872.

CHAPTER VI
THE "GALLICAN" UNIVERSITY ASSAULTED

In the early 1870's, the university question closely paralleled developments in the dismemberment controversy and assumed an ideological character. In the preceding period, the needs of Montreal's Catholics justified demanding a university. Now, the motive was the pernicious doctrines disseminated at Laval. Between these two phases, Bourget received in his diocese priests whose open and virulent criticisms of courses taught at the Séminaire and the university made them unwelcome in the Quebec City region. They alleged that Laval was indoctrinating French Canadian youth. Three factors appeared to confirm their accusations. Some Laval professors boisterously participated in provincial and federal politics. Taschereau and theologians at the Séminaire de Québec offered opinions on dismemberment based on a definite conception of Church-State relations. Finally, while Laval offered to establish a branch in Montreal, it insisted on a uniform curriculum and on exclusive hiring privileges. Thus, the parent institution seemingly wanted to imprint a specific character on its offspring.

Between 1870 and 1873, the dimensions of the university dispute, like those of dismemberment, widened. Bourget

opened up a new front in Quebec City, while reviving operations in Rome. The Jesuits, who assumed a more active role, asked the provincial parliament to grant Collège Sainte-Marie degree-granting privileges. This implicated politicians in the controversy.

Meanwhile, Rome assumed the same ambivalent posture, simultaneously maintaining Laval's privileges without discouraging Montreal's pretensions. Despite the Propaganda's heartening words to Bourget's envoys, the Cardinals refused to take any initiative without the consent of the majority of Quebec bishops. These, of course, solidly supported Laval. Still, Rome did not definitely decide the question. Thus, as the university controversy stretched on, relations between the dioceses of Montreal and Quebec City seriously deteriorated. The abrasive writings of passionately committed journalists certainly aggravated an already tense situation, polarizing opinion and alienating the antagonists even more.

* * *

Despite Dr. Pierre Beaubien's promptings¹, Bourget did not spur the Propaganda to reconsider the 1865 decision on the university during the Vatican Council. He viewed dismemberment and the Institut Canadien as top priorities

¹ ACAM, 820.001 Beaubien à Désautels, 9 juin 1869. This letter is cited at length in Desjardins, 273-274.

and devoted himself primarily to those questions.²

In Montreal, meanwhile, the Institut Canadien had recently established a law faculty affiliated with Victoria University. Some feared that this presaged a lay French Canadian University. Lawyers like Cherrier, Trudel, and C. S. Rodier called for a counter-faculty to nip the Institut's aspirations in the bud.³ The initiatives, supported by press campaigns, were sensitizing Montrealers to the university issue. Hospice-Anthelme Verreau, a Laval sympathizer and director of Montreal's Normal School, believed that public pressure would soon force the Assembly to comply.⁴

To check this movement, the Séminaire de Québec offered in the fall of 1870 an annex of its law faculty to the diocese of Montreal. However, Rector Taschereau laid down certain conditions. The royal charter stipulated that university curriculum be uniform and that Laval's council have exclusive rights to appoint faculty members. Nevertheless, Montreal professors would eventually be eligible to sit on the governing board. The Séminaire refused to assume the cost of establishing the annex, but noted that St-Sulpice offered their cabinet de lecture to accomodate the

2 ACAM, 901.059 Bourget à Paré, 28 juin 1869.

3 For more details, vide Desjardins, 274-278.

4 Archives du Séminaire de Québec, (ASQ), Université 106 #27 H. A. Verreau à T. Hamel, 21 déc. 1870.

faculty. Finally, the rector promised to appoint a religious moderator whose duties would include admitting students, maintaining discipline, and watching over courses and exams.⁵

At the same time, Taschereau consulted his contact-man in Montreal, Verreau, on possible appointments to the faculty. The Rector wanted an exclusively conservative teaching staff. Verreau replied that the Conservative Party possessed few distinguished lawyers capable of teaching serious courses. He did recommend scholarly conservatives like Cherrier, F. P. Pominville, H. F. Rainville, L. A. Jetté, and especially J. U. Beaudry.⁶ The principal of the Normal School, however, expressed certain reservations about Laval's overture to Montreal, particularly about its insistence to monopolize staff appointments and to keep Bourget outside the law faculty, while leaving him all the financial burdens.⁷ Verreau in fact delineated the causes which impelled the bishop to dismiss Laval's offer summarily.

Just as Taschereau made these overtures, the Journal de Trois-Rivières began its crusade against Laval, hotbed of gallicanism. These articles were inspired by a Lorraine Jesuit, Antonin Braun, who spent fourteen years

⁵ ACAM, 295.101 Taschereau à Bourget, 7 oct. 1870.

⁶ ASQ, Université 106 # 11 H. A. Verreau à Taschereau, 26 sept. 1870.

⁷ Ibid., Université 106 # 27 Verreau à T. Hamel, 21 déc. 1870.

in Quebec City and was then transferred out of the diocese to Montreal at Taschereau's insistence.⁸ They were based on his old critiques of Laval courses on marriage and fabrique law.⁹ Braun berated the faculty's slavish adherence to Robert-Joseph Pothier, the illustrious jansenist jurist.¹⁰ The Nouveau Monde soon followed the Journal's lead, attacking both Laval and Beaudry as prime gallican exponents.

Alexis Pelletier had also been banished from the capital for his truculent pamphlets against Laval. This fervent gaumiste,¹¹ whose spiritual advisor was Antonin Braun, maintained that many of his former colleagues at the Séminaire de Québec, had studied at the Ecole des Carmes and at the University of Paris where they imbibed gallican doctrines. Laval resembled very closely its counterpart in Paris "qu'effectivement on regarde comme un modèle".¹² From their studies in Rome, these men derived nothing but a chilling arrogance, for they remained profoundly ignorant

8 Desjardins, 276.

9 Archives du Séminaire de Trois Rivières (ASTR), Braun à Laflèche, 23 déc. 1870.

10 Ibid., Braun à Laflèche, pas daté, (1870?). See article on Pothier in P. Larousse, Grand Dictionnaire du XIXe Siècle. XII (Paris, 1874).

11 P. Sylvain, "Gaumisme en Vasæ Clos", Revue de l'Université Laval. (nov. 1949), 252-7.

12 APFR, SC 1868-71 Luigi Filippi, Vescovo di Aquila, à Barnabò, 6 nov. 1868.

of canon law.

As a result, religion was absent from courses at Laval. Medical students were given materialist text-books which, among other things, scandalously diagnosed St-Theresa's mystical trances as nervous disorders. Gallican and jansenist authors infested the law faculty. Descartes reigned supreme in philosophy.

On ne pardonnerait pas à un Professeur de dire
du mal de Descartes; mais on les laisserait
en paix s'ils insultaient les pères de l'Eglise.
Quand les élèves font des mauvais thèmes latins...
on leur dit qu'ils écrivent le latin des Sts.
Pères.¹³

Unexpurgated pagan authors had the lion's share of courses in classical literature, while patristic writings assumed a very secondary position.

Despite Archbishop Baillargeon's increased warnings and threats of banishment to remoter regions of the province, Pelletier continued his unbridled attacks. Finally in July 1872, unable to withstand further alleged harassment, the priest requested Bourget to press for his transfer to the diocese of Montreal.¹⁴ The bishop now had two outspoken critics of Laval within easy reach.

Of course, throughout the province and the Catholic world, it was quite common to scrutinize curriculum closely to ensure orthodoxy. Verreau, reputed for his broad-mindedness, alerted Bourget to Dr. Hector Peltier's lectures

13 APFR, SC 1868-71 Filippi à Barnabò, 6 nov. 1868.

14 ACAM, 440.107 "Pelletier" A. Pelletier à Bourget, 13 juil. 1872.

at the Ecole de Médecine.¹⁵ He cited specific examples of perverse principles, which the bishop repeated in his admonitory letter to the professor.

(Les étudiants) sont révoltés de vous entendre dire que St-Augustin s'est agenouillé pour demander la chasteté quand l'âge des passions serait passé (...) que par l'absorption, un organe qui n'est pas en usage est détruit; que quand on est vieux on n'a plus besoin de plaisir; parce que tout va en dépérissant et qu'ainsi on doit s'accorder des plaisirs quand on est jeune.¹⁶

Bourget decried the cynicism pervading Peltier's lectures and suggested that every trace of immorality and irreligion be removed from them.

In his defense, the doctor indignantly lashed out at the rude and ignorant students who deliberately misinterpreted his statements. As for the absorption of organs, he maintained that Dr. Joseph Récamier of Paris developed this respectable technique. "... Son expérience comme Médecin des Communautés Religieuses lui donnait une autorité hors-ligne, puisque ... on se servait de moyens compressifs pour faire disparaître tous ces apanages de volupté dont la Religieuse devait être exempté."¹⁷

Nevertheless, Peltier was well warned and submitted to the bishop.

Meanwhile, the Séminaire de Québec closely supervised

15 ASQ, Université 106 # 96 Verreau à Hamel, 25 janv. 1872.

16 ACAM, RLB 19 Bourget à H. Peltier, 19 déc. 1871.

17 Ibid., 820.001 H. Peltier à Bourget, 23 déc. 1871. Joseph Récamier (1774-1852), doctor at the Hôtel Dieu in Paris; professor at the Faculty of Medicine and at the Collège de France.

its own staff, not for their orthodoxy, but for their political activities. François Langelier, nephew of L.J. Casault, Laval's founder, and professor of political economy, ran as a Liberal in the 1871 provincial elections. The new university rector, Thomas Hamel, pointed out to him that the university only grudgingly tolerated his political tactics. Ideally, professors, like judges, should transcend partisanship. "Tant qu'à s'en mêler, s'ils le font en faveur du gouvernement (si la foi et les moeurs le permettent), au moins ils ne font pas grand mal à l'Institution, mais ce n'est pas mieux en principe."¹⁸ Hamel conceded though that, as long as Canadian politics did not involve fundamental social or religious issues, staff members would be free to exercise their political options. The Rector reminded Langelier, however, that professors should always behave in a dignified manner and constantly emphasize principles rather than personalities.¹⁹ Laval, as a Catholic institution, should never come into play during partisan conflicts. On the hustings, the politician should minimize as much as possible his status of professor.²⁰

In 1872, the university question once again came to the fore. Siméon Pagnuelo circulated a petition among Montreal's lawyers and doctors, requesting that Bourget obtain a university for their city. Verreau noted:

18 ASQ, Hamel à Langelier, 3 juin 1871.

19 Ibid., Hamel à Langelier, 17 janv. 1872. Although Hamel never sent this letter, it does illustrate university policy.

20 Ibid., Hamel à Langelier, 3 juin 1871.

"nous sommes menacés de pagnuelonisme. Mgr. de Birtha (Pinsonnault) est pagnuelonisé; je crois qu'on veut pagnueloniser le St-Père, l'Archevêque étant impagnuelonisable."²¹
 Eighty-one lawyers and forty-four doctors signed the document. The fact that such notorious anti-programmistes as Chapleau, Mousseau, L. O. David, H. F. Rainville appended their names attested to the genuine popularity of the cause.

The bishop of Montreal therefore encouraged his Roman agent to raise the matter before the Propaganda. The timing, he thought, was right. Taschereau's report on the parishes and the Quebec theologians' opinion on dismemberment demonstrated Laval's gallican sympathies. Désautels should capitalize on this evidence to press for a university which would lead the Catholic revival in Quebec.²² Bourget, who in the early sixties favored affiliation with Laval, provided the terms were reasonable, now rejected it on principle. Both the soundness of the university's teaching and the integrity of its professors were in doubt.²³

Accordingly, in the fall, Désautels presented Montreal's petition to the pope, and assessed for Bourget the Propaganda's reaction to it. Barnabò, he reported, termed the petition truly providential and strongly encouraged the envoy to see

21 ASQ, Université 107 # 10 Verreau à B. Pâquet, 23 mai 1872.

22 ACAM, 901.061 Bourget à Désautels, 2 août 1872.

23 ASTR, Bourget à Laflèche, 23 nov. 1872.

it through as soon as possible. He promised Désautels his full support. "Ce langage aurait certainement une grande portée," observed the representative, "s'il était possible de se fier entièrement à ce (que) dit ce bon vieux Cardinal, mais malheureusement il me semble qu'il change d'opinion d'un jour à l'autre." Giovanni Simeoni, Congregation Secretary, was more straightforward than the Prefect. Rome would approve a university charter, Simeoni stated, if the Quebec bishops collectively asked for it.²⁴ Désautels nevertheless believed that the pope would grant Montreal's request.

Grasping this straw, Bourget decided not to block the Jesuit petition to the legislature, soliciting degree-granting privileges for Collège Ste-Marie. He and his allies pinned their hopes for a parliamentary victory on petitions which were being circulated among the inhabitants of Montreal and district. Parish priests were asked to act as middlemen in this operation. Inspired by Bourget's pastoral letter on the university, they would stimulate popular support for the cause.²⁵ Time, however, was of the essence. Parliament only allowed a brief period for private legislation. Edouard de Bellefeuille, Jesuit-trained lawyer, active in many of Bourget's enterprises and author of the bill, noted that more work was needed to mould public opinion.²⁶

24 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 14 oct. 1872.

25 Ibid., 820.001 E.de Bellefeuille à Paré, 18 nov. 1872.

26 Archives Nationales du Québec (ANQ), Papiers A. Labelle, E. de Bellefeuille à A. Labelle, 18 nov. 1872.

Concurrently, the Jesuits tried to enlist the Collège de St-Hyacinthe's active support, but encountered Mgr. Larocque's scarcely concealed hostility. "...Voilà que l'on ameute les fidèles... de Montréal contre ... les Evêques qui se sont prononcés contre l'Université des Jésuites...."²⁷ Larocque was steadfastly opposed to the machinations of the Jesuits, whom he regarded as foreigners both in their national and religious outlook.²⁸

Bourget also asked Antoine Labelle, who was going to Quebec City on his perennial railroad and colonisation business, to sound out opinion in the capital. Some interpreted this move as a thinly veiled attempt to exert political pressure.²⁹ Labelle's behavior encouraged these impressions. He urged politicians to comply with their constituents' wishes or risk defeat.³⁰ "Ça mis l'université en émoi et l'on travaille activement à nous faire manquer notre coup."³¹

In the Archbishop's circle, the Jesuit move provoked shock and anger. Once again, Bourget's actions appeared inexplicable. The previous year, he had not deigned to

27 ADSH, Beloeil I, Larocque à Taschereau, 28 nov. 1872.

28 Ibid., Larocque à P. S. Gendron, 12 nov. 1872.

29 ACAM, 730.002 Labelle à Bourget, 16 nov. 1872.

30 Ibid., 730.002 Labelle à Bourget, 15 nov. 1872.

31 Ibid., 730.002 Labelle à Bourget, 16 nov. 1872.

reply officially to Laval's generous offer of affiliation. Now, he flouted Rome's unambiguous decision of 1865. Obviously, the bishop's duplicity explained everything. He was slyly trying to present Rome with a fait accompli. Once the legislature sanctioned his request, the Propaganda would also have to concede a university to Montreal.

The counter-attack began. Laval again threatened to close its doors if the legislature sanctioned the Jesuit petition. The university accused Bourget and his allies of gallicanism, of appealing to civil authority against a Roman sentence. Bishops Guigues and Langevin publicly denounced this incomplicant behavior.³²

Taschereau let it be known that, by voting for the measure, legislators would be disobeying the Holy See. He sought confirmation of this view by sending a telegram to Rome, which asked rather rhetorically whether the 1865 sentence was revoked and whether Bourget could ask the assembly to revoke it.

In the midst of this passionate debate, a revealing confidential letter left Laval for the Sulpician Seminary. Rector Hamel confessed to Baile that it was no longer expedient to resist the popular clamor for a university in Montreal. The situation would only deteriorate.

Je pose donc ... qu'il faut une université,
ou ... l'équivalent à Montréal et que si
nous ne la fessons pas, d'autres la feront.
La question se réduit donc à celle-ci; Quel

32 ACAM, 730.002 Labelle à Bourget, 16 nov. 1872.

est l'intérêt de la religion et du bien dans
 sons sens le plus large: est-ce de laisser
 faire les RR.PP.Jésuites ou d'essayer de
 (seconder?) Laval?³³

Laval, he explained, was so structured that the laity could never gain the upper hand and change its direction. Nothing belonged to the university. The Séminaire owned everything and kept its staff in line because it alone funded all the faculties. The Archbishop's veto was the ultimate security against lay encroachment. The Sulpicians could form the core of a similar structure in Montreal. They should not miss the opportunity because they could not afford to relinquish their beneficial hold on the wealthy classes.

At the same time, Hamel asked Verreau whether the entire staff of the Ecole de Médecine backed the Jesuits and whether the university could rely on possible anti-Jesuit dissidents to promote a medical annex of Laval.³⁴

Throughout this period, Labelle reported on events at the legislature. His first meeting with some Montreal-area members revealed that the university bill would likely get a majority.³⁵

However, the intensity of opposition impressed him. The adversaries of the measure reflected the feelings

³³ ASQ, Lettres Y # 6 Projet de lettre Hamel à Baile, 28 nov. 1872. Baile à M. E. Méthot, 27 déc. 1872.

³⁴ Ibid., Université 107 # 61 Hamel à Verreau, 3 déc. 1872.

³⁵ ACAM, 730.002 A. Labelle à Bourget, 15 nov. 1872.

prevalent at the Archdiocese. Many were hostile to the Jesuits for supposedly fostering an anti-national spirit and especially for favoring annexation to the United States.³⁶ Some wanted to know why Bourget arrogantly rejected Taschereau's offer of affiliation.³⁷ However, the Archbishop's contention that members could not in conscience approve the bill presented the greatest obstacle and would dissuade many potential supporters. Labelle suggested therefore that the bishop seek approval in principle, then withhold the bill until Rome formally sanctioned it.³⁸ Bourget remained firm. He refused to jeopardize his excellent chances of success.

At the legislative assembly, the scales shifted with each new argument. To counteract Taschereau's opinion, the bishop of Montreal reluctantly published an open letter to his Metropolitan in the Nouveau Monde. He claimed to possess documents from Rome indicating that the Cardinal Prefect endorsed his legislative initiative.³⁹ Bourget of course would have preferred keeping Désautels' correspondence private, at least until he received further news from Rome. But, circumstances forced him to act. Legislators reacted positively to Bourget's public statement.

36 ACAM, 730.002 A. Labelle à Bourget, 16 nov. 1872.

37 Ibid., 730.002 Labelle à Bourget, 19 nov. 1872.

38 Ibid., 730.002 Labelle à Bourget, 16 nov. 1872.

39 Desjardins' assertion (290-1) that Barnabò supported the university scheme in a letter to Désautels is incorrect. It is based on a misreading of the envoy's letter of October 14. The Cardinal Prefect never committed himself in writing. The bishop of Montreal, whose compulsiveness for things Roman is legendary, acted solely on Barnabò's verbal assurances.

"On la trouve noble, digne et calme."⁴⁰ Taschereau's open reply, however, again created uncertainty.⁴¹ Finally, the Metropolitan's telegram to Rome definitely reversed the tide.

Wrote Trudel: "Le Télégramme ... nous frappe comme d'un coup de foudre Nous avons maintenant la certitude à-peu-près complète que ce télégramme, et surtout l'attitude de l'Archevêque, nous laissera en minorité."⁴² Nevertheless, Canon Lamarche egged on Bourget's disciples. The telegram, he maintained, cleverly distorted the truth, since Bourget never suggested that the Roman decrees were formally revoked. Nor did he intend to force the Holy See's hand by appealing to the government. "C'est le moment du courage. Soufflez le feu sacré partout."⁴³

Rome was equally thunderstruck by the Archbishop's communication. Désautels reported that the Propaganda regarded the Jesuit initiative with such disapproval that all the bishop's business would likely suffer. The envoy's hope that Pius IX would grant Montreal a university now vanished completely.⁴⁴ Disheartened because he had been kept ignorant of events in Quebec, Désautels still tried to repair the damage quickly without awaiting lengthier

40 ACAM, 820.001 Labelle à Bourget, 25 nov. 1872.

41 Ibid., 820.001 Labelle à Bourget, 27 nov. 1872.

42 Ibid., 820.001 Trudel à Bourget, 28 nov. 1872.

43 Archives de la Société de Jésus du Canada Français (ASJCF), 5240.7 Lamarche à A. Desjardins, 29 nov. 1872.

44 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 2 déc. 1872.

explanations from home. He diplomatically drew responsibility on himself and tried to exonerate his bishop.⁴⁵

In the wake of Barnabò's reply by telegram, Bourget had the university bill withdrawn. Then calmly followed the explanations and reflections on the turbulent events of the preceding two weeks. The bishop maintained,

Les objections faites à l'érection des paroisses canoniques, tirées de difficultés que peut présenter la loi civile, se présentaient d'elles-mêmes par rapport à l'établissement d'une Université. Il y avait donc tout à gagner et rien à perdre en s'adressant tout d'abord à la Législature.⁴⁶

Basing himself on optimistic reports from Rome, Bourget had merely intended to adopt the same procedure which Laval used in 1852: a simultaneous petition to the Holy See and to civil government. "Quoiqu'il en soit, nous avons agi franchement et loyalement."⁴⁷

There was one slight flaw in this reasoning. Isidore Gravel, pastor at Laprairie, habitué of the diocese, who knew all the principals well, pointed it out.

Le Cardinal Barnabò a pu parler sans croire que l'on publierait ses dires et aujourd'hui il peut penser qu'on l'a compromis.... D'ailleurs il est vieux, bien vieux, se rappellera-t-il ce qu'il a pu dire, comme il dit souvent les choses sans leur donner une grande portée.⁴⁸

45 APFR, SOCG (mars 1873) Désautels à Simeoni, 2 déc. 1872.

46 ACAM, RLB 21 Bourget à Désautels, 1 fév. 1873.

47 Ibid., 901.061 Bourget à Désautels, 29 nov. 1872.

48 ADSJQ, Laprairie, I. Gravel à Paré, 1 déc. 1872.

Barnabò did indeed forget his fall statement. In a reproachful letter to Bourget, the Prefect reiterated the Propaganda's policy: the provincial hierarchy would have to approve a second university before Rome would act. Bourget protested. The bishops who established universities in their cities considered them diocesan institutions. Their colleagues had no say in their administration. Indeed, Horan and Guigues had not even consulted the bishops before founding their establishments. Why then did the Propaganda formulate a discriminatory policy for Montreal? The prelate, however, yielded to authority.

Bourget also replied to Désautels who reproached him for seeming to abandon the proposed university to the Jesuits. Necessity dictated that an Order form the core of the institution, the bishop emphasized. A religious community alone could offer adequate conditions for financing, staffing, and accommodations which legislators required. The choice fell either upon the Jesuits or the Sulpicians. The former "m'ont paru offrir plus de garanties sous tous les rapports."⁴⁹ The Holy See or the bishop could subsequently specify how the university would be administered.

The time for explanations quickly drew to a close, as Taschereau announced his imminent departure for Rome. He intended to seek a sure remedy for all the ills plaguing the Quebec Church. Bourget's health prevented

49 ACAM, RLB 21 Bourget à Désautels, 1 fév. 1873.

him from going to the holy city. He therefore pressed Laflèche to make the trip. Letters and a petition, signed by Cherrier, Trudel, Pagnuelo, de Montigny, Taillon, de Bellefeuille among others, rained on Trois-Rivières, urging the bishop to take up the challenge. The stakes were high: "défendre la cause et les oeuvres du parti ultramontain en Canada."⁵⁰ Overwhelmed by this movement, Laflèche accepted. He asked that Antonin Braun accompany him.⁵¹

Before the Propaganda, Bourget's representative presented a case with strong ideological overtones. To articulate his views, Laflèche depended on his travel companion, Braun, and on Alexis Pelletier who supplied him with two long briefs.

The bishop of Trois Rivières contended that while Laval's offer of affiliation acknowledged Montreal's needs, it also revealed an obsession with monopoly. It emphasized the university's arrogance and despotism.⁵² Bourget would be as much a foreigner to the annex established in his city as to Laval. Moreover, by demanding exclusive hiring rights, Laval made the Ecole de Médecine utterly dependent on the university council. After affiliation, the Séminaire could conceivably dismiss the school's entire

50 ASTR, Pagnuelo à Laflèche, 4 déc. 1872.

51 Ibid., Laflèche à Bourget, 9 déc. 1872.

52 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Pelletier sur l'impossibilité d'établir une succursale, janv. 1873. Déclaration de l'École de Médecine, P. Beaubien et E. Peltier, 16 déc. 1872.

staff. Accordingly, the Ecole rejected the proposed annex and refused to have anything more to do with Laval. Unless a Catholic university were founded, the school intended to continue its very satisfactory relationship with Victoria.⁵³

Laflèche predicted that Laval's wish to standardize curriculum would give rise to perpetual controversy.

Le vrai moyen d'établir la paix entre Montréal et Québec est de renoncer à toutes prétentions de réduire l'une de ces deux villes à un état de dépendance de l'autre, en fait d'enseignement, et de reconnaître que le droit d'avoir une université est le meme pour Montréal que pour Québec.⁵⁴

Pelletier insisted that intellectually the two cities were poles apart. Parents would never permit that their children be indoctrinated by professors whom they bitterly opposed.

"On y viendrait enseigner la nécessité de l'intervention du gouvernement dans l'érection des paroisses ... dans l'administration des sacrements, dans la question du mariage."⁵⁵

Doctors and lawyers from Montreal would never teach the same courses as at Laval. In the metropolis, a spirit of devotion to Roman teachings permeated all disciplines.

Jurists published scholarly articles which Rome praised.⁵⁶

"Aussi pour le chergé indigène, pour le fidèles de Montréal, tout ce qui vient de Rome est ... SACRE."⁵⁷ Montreal wanted a truly Catholic university.

53 ACAM, 820.012 Mémoire Laflèche, 23 janv. 1873. 820.001 Déclaration Beaubien-Peltier, 16 déc. 1872.

54 Ibid., 820.012 Mémoire Laflèche, 23 janv. 1873.

55 ASTR, Pagnuelo à Laflèche, 7 déc. 1872.

56 ACAM, 820.001 Mémoire Pelletier, janv. 1873.

57 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) Supplique des Vicaires-Forains, 18 déc. 1872.

Because of its teaching and staff, Laval unfortunately did not fulfill these expectations. Laflèche cited the testimony of fifteen priests from the Quebec Archdiocese who affirmed that, in twenty years of existence, the university produced very few outstanding Catholic scholars. Courses either expounded error or simply ignored religion.⁵⁸ Thus, Protestants, astonishingly enough, expressed satisfaction with Laval's teaching. "Est-ce possible de ne blesser aucune croyance dans l'enseignement du droit et de la médecine, si l'on n'en bannit absolument toute idée religieuse?"⁵⁹ Even Liberals like L. A. Dessaulles lauded the enlightened young clergy at the Séminaire de Québec for supposedly extirpating the prejudices of religious charlatans and hypocritical politicians.

Laflèche also produced evidence against Laval's staff. A prominent citizen of Trois-Rivières revealed that Protestants and freemasons taught in law and medicine. A Quebec federal cabinet minister refused to send his sons to Laval because some professors belonged to the Rouge party. Joseph Cauchon, editor of the Conservative Journal de Québec, argued that religion was poorly served when Laval clung to demagogues like François Langelier and free-thinkers like Dr. Hubert Larue. Langelier had exasperated Conservatives by his public attacks against the Chauveau administration and by his attempts to woo ultramontanes. He had severely

58 ACAM, 820.012 Mémoire Laflèche, 23 janv. 1873.

59 Ibid., 820.001 Mémoire Pelletier, janv. 1873.

criticized Beaudry's treatise and praised Pagnuelo's book.⁶⁰
 Larue's brother, Georges, shamelessly proclaimed his
 liberalism in the provincial and federal elections of 1871
 and 1872. Laflèche concluded,

Des accusations aussi graves dans la bouche
 d'un personnage, tel que l'Honorable Cauchon,
 et surtout apporté à connaître si bien le
 personnel de l'Université Laval, sont
 certainement de nature ... à discréditer
 complètement cette institution.⁶¹

Archbishop Taschereau and Rector Thomas Hamel easily
 repulsed the accusations against Laval and its professors.
 The provincial hierarchy, they held, appeared quite satisfied
 with the university's orthodoxy. In 1871, the Séminaire de
 Québec was obliged to justify Laval's doctrine as a result
 of the Journal de Trois Rivières' protracted assault. At
 that time, the bishops expressed not the slightest criticism
 of this document.⁶²

Regarding Laval's staff, Taschereau and Hamel admitted
 that Protestants and freemasons held chairs at the university.
 But, they stressed that in North America freemasonry was a
 mutual aid association without the anticlerical overtones
 of European confraternities. The two Protestant professors,
 sole experts in their fields, gave courses completely
 unrelated to religion, such as maritime and commercial law.
 Should they be removed, students would simply attend their
 lectures at the Protestant Morrin College, an obviously

60 ASQ, Université 107 # 23 Verreau à Ad. Légaré, nov. 1872.

61 ACAM, Mémoire Laflèche, 23 janv. 1873.

62 APFR, SOCG (mars 1873) Hamel à Barnabò, 4 fév. 1873.

worse alternative. Laval's representatives also defended the law faculty's use of Pothier. Until the civil code, they affirmed, no other authoritative source existed. The jurist was the most prolific and comprehensive commentator of French law and, therefore, indispensable to students. As for Professors Larue and Langelier, both men frequented the sacraments. The latter, although a member of the opposition party, upheld sound principles. Partisan considerations alone motivated his detractors.

Taschereau and Hamel also reaffirmed their hostility to an autonomous university in Montreal. Laval could not withstand the competition. Nor could a Catholic establishment thrive in an atmosphere polluted by the Institut Canadien and McGill. Either academic standards and discipline would be sacrificed, or Catholic students would flock to other institutions. Finally, the diocese of Montreal did not possess the manpower nor the resources for a full university. The envoys, therefore, again offered to create annexes of law and medicine.⁶³

The Jesuit bill certainly damaged Bourget's standing in Rome. However, Montreal Catholic newspapers published articles in late 1872 and early 1873 which compromised his cause even more. The rabid Franc Parleur, whose editorial board included Adolphe Pinsonnault, a bishop deposed for maladministration, Alexis Pelletier, and Alphonse Villeneuve, violently assailed Bourget's opponents. Les Quatres Lettres

63 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) Mémoire Taschereau et Hamel, 24 janv. 1873.

ridiculed the four Quebec bishops who endorsed Laval's position. Guigues was termed a "... genre de loose fish du Haut Canada", while Taschereau was depicted as "...cette fière citadelle avec son air de touch me not... d'une odieuse et basse jalousie de toute autre grandeur que la sienne."⁶⁴ La Télégraphie Sacrée Mise en Paraboles used an uncommonly aggressive idiom: "... L'impuissant Laval avait introduit dans sa demeure ... la collection complète de tous ces petits bourreaux-manqués qui forme le personnel-de-cour des petites Principautés pédantes et collet-monté ... jansénistes et vénimeuses."⁶⁵

Taschereau skillfully manipulated these and others articles. He portrayed his suffragan as a man lacking all proportion, who sanctioned extremist opinion and the subversion of hierarchical authority. Bourget, he maintained, obviously knew about these scurrilous works since their authors lived with him or frequented the episcopal palace. Yet, he allowed them to write about controversial questions which were being adjudicated in Rome. The bishop seemed to be using every conceivable tactic to win his case.⁶⁶

Laflèche noted how effective the Archbishop's campaign was.

64 APFR, SOCG (mars 1873) Abbé Ste-Foi (A. Villeneuve) Les Quatres Lettres. Imprimerie du Franc Parleur, (Montréal, 1872).

65 Ibid., SC 1872-74. A. Fegin, Télégraphie Sacrée Mise en Paraboles. Imprimerie du Franc Parleur, (Montréal, 1872).

66 Ibid., Acta (mars 1873) Mémoire Taschereau-Hamel, 24 Janv. 1873.

Le plus grand obstacle que nous ayons à vaincre sont les préjugés contre l'Evêque de Montréal. Ils datent de loin, et malheureusement les excès de la presse de Montréal qui sont exploités ici avec tout le zèle possible ne sont pas de nature à diminuer ces préjugés.... Ici à Rome on trouve fort mal cette manière de défendre la vérité.⁶⁷

Laflèche's only defense was to accuse the Archbishop of failing to censure Quebec City newspapers for propagating liberal and gallican doctrines.

In mid-March 1873, the Cardinals met in general congregation to deal with Canadian problems. They decided to postpone judgement on the university, pending clarification of certain contradictory facts. The Propaganda asked the Quebec bishops to provide data concerning the possibility of founding a university in Montreal. Rome also instructed Laval to dismiss Protestant and freemason professors when convenient.

Laflèche considered that prospects were excellent for Montreal. The Congregation's decision to await further information, he believed, was merely a ploy to appease the Archbishop who had lost out on two other important Canadian questions. The Cardinals probably thought it better to let tempers cool before resolving this final problem.⁶⁸

Two months later, the bishops divided along predictable lines at their provincial meeting. They attempted a

67 ASTR, Laflèche à Luc Désilets, sans date, fév. 1873.

68 Ibid., Laflèche à O. Caron, 17 mars 1873.

consensus on the Propaganda's questions, but the majority finally supported the Séminaire's theses. Only on one major point did they diverge from this position. The bishops backing Laval believed that Montreal did have the human and financial resources for a full university, even though the costs would be enormous. They hastened to add, though, that such an institution would greatly harm Laval.⁶⁹

Rector Hamel composed a brief which accompanied the episcopal report to Rome. He added an ideological dimension to his repertoire of arguments against a second university. Would Rome be wise, he asked, to set up a militant Catholic institution in a city where the Protestant presence was so obvious? He reminded the Cardinals that the great freedom which the Church enjoyed in Canada was not acquired by right, but by "... la prudence la bienveillance témoignée dans tout ce qui ne concerne pas la foi,... la bonne entente dans tous les rapports sociaux."⁷⁰ This happy state could cease very abruptly. A Protestant majority controlled the appointment of judges and of lieutenant-governors. Cooperation, not confrontation, was the surest policy for the future of Canadian Catholicism.

Désautels for his part avoided ideological themes. Instead he followed Laflèche's suggestion, showing that

69 APFR, Acta (janv. 1874).

70 Ibid., SOCG (janv. 1874) Mémoire Hamel, 23 mai 1873.

Montreal had the resources for a Catholic university and suggesting that means could be found to prevent Laval's decline.⁷¹

The Cardinals met again on January 27, 1874. They could no more agree than the Quebec hierarchy on the feasibility of founding a university in Montreal and on the repercussions which such an establishment would have on Laval. Thus, they postponed their decision indefinitely.⁷² Benjamin Pâquet ebulliently reported to his colleagues at the Séminaire de Québec that the "enragés de Montréal" would not get their university.⁷³ Désautels considered that the issue would die unless the Propaganda were compelled to revive it. He felt incapable of doing so on his own and therefore urged Bourget to make a direct appeal to Pius IX.⁷⁴

* * *

Taschereau's offer of affiliation set the tone for the university controversy in the early 1870's. Bourget complained that Quebec City placed all the financial burdens on Montreal. But, this factor was clearly not an issue. The Sulpicians offered the Cabinet de Lecture to house the new law faculty. Facilities for medicine already existed. Professors' salaries would be drawn from tuition

71 APFR, Acta (janv. 1874) Mémoire Désautels, 22 déc. 1873.

72 Ibid., Acta (janv. 1874).

73 ASQ, Université 36 # 80 B. Pâquet à Bolduc, 10 fév. 1874.

74 ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 5 fév. 1874.

fees.

The real issue had not changed since 1862: who would control the annex? Faithful to its old stand, the university insisted on uniform curriculum and on exclusive hiring rights. Bourget was relegated to a nominal position in the annex. But, academic considerations alone did not motivate the Séminaire de Québec. An ideological element came into play in the early seventies.

The university wanted to preserve harmonious relations with civil authority and the Protestant majority. Taschereau accordingly asked Verreau to propose eligible conservatives who would staff the law faculty. In the same vein, Laval looked askance at Langelier's involvements with the Opposition. Verreau complained about the professor's verbal assaults on Chauveau and Beaudry. When Hamel approached the Sulpicians, he recognized their close ties to Montreal's Catholic establishment. The Rector finally admitted the Séminaire's deep-seated concern in his brief of May, 1873.

The Archdiocese of Quebec viewed Bourget as an impetuous, immoderate and stubborn man, especially since his sweeping liturgical reforms of the 1850's, although antagonisms stretched back even further. However, the conflict transcended questions of style and character.

The Séminaire feared the new militant doctrine of Catholic rights enunciated in Montreal. As Hamel stated, Catholicism had no rights in Canada. The Church achieved

a privileged status through quiet diplomacy and especially by cultivating close contacts with civil authority, both Catholic and Protestant. Montreal appeared to believe that Catholicism's prerogatives were inscribed in the constitution and that they were protected against encroachment by struggle, assertion, and confrontation. Trudel's speech at the Guibord trial, the programme catholique, Pagnuelo's treatise, the truculence of Montreal's press, Braun's Noces D'Or sermon; all threatened the delicate balance between Church and State. These phenomena profoundly disconcerted the Séminaire.

For Quebec, Bourget incarnated this spirit and all its excesses. His influence over the new faculties had to be neutralized; the Jesuits who appeared to be in league with him had to be isolated. Laval determined to deny institutional expression to this current of thought, just as it prevented the gaumistes from propagating their doctrines in the mid-1860's. Thus, the Séminaire contributed to, if not initiated, the ideological orientation of the controversy by proposing to establish an annex in Montreal. The Séminaire was by no means the unsuspecting victim of doctrinaire enragés from the metropolis. In the broader context, however, the university question was a tributary of dismemberment and received its ideological impetus from there.

For Bourget, the situation of Catholic education in Montreal badly deteriorated since the mid-1850's. The

Church did not control one institution of higher learning. The Institut's law school was affiliated with McGill; the Ecole de Médecine, with Victoria; the collèges classiques were still deprived of degree-granting powers. The Church was more or less present in these establishments. But, Bourget believed that the Church should be firmly implanted in education in order to radiate its influence on the young. In the age of democracy and particularly in a land of mixed religions, opinion had to be moulded as early as possible. Again, his was a preventative rather than a curative approach. Yet, Laval continued to propose variations on its initial offers of affiliation. Its desire for hegemony still persisted.

A new element, however, entered the picture. The State encroached on the Church's rights; Protestant chauvinism reared its ugly head in New Brunswick and the Red River; yet both the Séminaire de Québec and the University Chancellor, the Archbishop, remained silent. Their close proximity with politicians bred a desire "de concilier les principes avec la politique de nos hommes d'état...."⁷⁵ The Archbishop's strong and successful lobby against the Jesuits' bill must have confirmed Bourget's ideas about the intimate relations between Taschereau and the politicians. Séminaire theologians exonerated Beaudry and Cartier's opinions on dismemberment. Taschereau

⁷⁵ ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à Désautels, 29 juil. 1872.

appropriated their thesis in his report to Rome. The same Archbishop deplored that Catholic educational rights were extinguished in New Brunswick, but refused to condemn French Canadian politicians. Bourget felt that these developments justified a new petition to Rome. He asked for a university "pour tenir en bride celle de Laval"⁷⁶, to propagate Catholic principles without political inhibition.

Since the Sulpicians used political connections to instigate opposition to dismemberment, they were unfit to direct the new establishment. The Jesuits, on the other hand, were removed from power, as the politicians' negative comments indicated. They offered appropriate guarantees of detachment. Bourget also sought out laymen who displayed a healthy independence from partisan discipline. He found them among the newly-emerging crop of young lawyers who, for whatever reason, were restive within traditional party structures.

Bourget's strategy certainly suffered from his naive compulsion to take everything that came from Rome at face value. Despite Désautels' reservations, he interpreted Barnabò's words as confirmation of the Propaganda's support.

The bishop of Montreal also had a typically romantic preoccupation with content rather than form. Although reproaching some polemicists for their abrasive and

⁷⁶ ACAM, 901.061 Bourget à Désautels, 2 août 1872.

irreverent style, he constantly justified their writings because they proclaimed the truth. This behavior reinforced his opponents' beliefs and did little to advance his cause in Rome.

The Propaganda pursued its ineffectual policy of appeasement. It ignored Bourget's thesis that a university had to be free of political influence. Since the bishop's ideological considerations were discarded, the university question was judged on the same basis as in 1865. While some Cardinals believed that the Ecole de Médecine's affiliation with Protestant institutions was dangerous, or at least indecorous, an equal number feared Laval's demise. Thus, the ambiguous policy continued. Officially, the Propaganda was open to the idea of a second university, but only if a majority of Quebec bishops agreed.

In the university dispute, the Archdiocese exposed an ideology which was as systematic and coherent as that of Bourget. Either Rome was unconscious of this fact, or it secretly agreed with Rector Hamel's apprehensions about a militant Catholic movement. However it perceived the situation, the Propaganda objectively supported the élitist conception of Church-State relations by refusing Montreal a university. In 1874, Bourget was left with the Séminaire's demand to monopolize the university faculties in his city.

However, the controversy did not take place in a vacuum. The situation had evolved since the mid-sixties.

By temporizing, Rome had indirectly fostered the ideological implications of dismemberment and of the university question. Just as dismemberment, the university question came to have nationalist implications. An institution dedicated to propagating Catholic principles when militant Anglo-Saxonism was in the ascendant in Ontario; an establishment refusing to compromise with politicians who followed the will of a Protestant majority, served the nationalist cause. The university question now involved the weight of French Canadians within Confederation, a dimension which Rome could not or did not appreciate.

BOURGET AND THE DREAM OF A FREE
CHURCH IN QUEBEC, 1862-1878

by

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A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Ph.D. in History

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
OTTAWA, CANADA, 1975



CHAPTER VII

TASCHEREAU JOINS THE FRAY

In the aftermath of the second pontifical decree on dismemberment Taschereau actively intervened on the Seminary's behalf and thus perpetuated the stalemate between the antagonists. His position became indiscernible from that of the Sulpicians. Polarization was complete. The ideological storm buffeting the Quebec Church intensified.

Taschereau's report clearly favored Sulpician special status. To achieve this goal, the Archbishop had to maintain the antagonists in a state of equilibrium. But, just as the Roman decree arrived in Canada, Superior Court granted civil registers to some non-Sulpician pastors. Bourget considered that the decision obviated his reducing the parishes to annexes, as the pontifical document seemingly required. Taschereau and the Sulpicians insisted that the judgement did not constitute civil recognition. They wanted the bishop to implement the decree to the letter. The Seminary made this a prerequisite to complying with the Roman sentence.

A power struggle ensued in Montreal, Quebec City, and Rome. Backed by 'informed opinion' at the Holy See, Bourget sought to extend his civil gains to Sulpician parishes. The Seminary successfully resisted with its customary dilatory

tactics. Taschereau abandoned his impartiality and finally resolved the contest. He exerted considerable political influence against his suffragan's attempts to have the legislature legitimize the new order. By the end of 1872, civil authority tacitly recognized Sulpician special status.

Taschereau considered this to be a partial victory. He insisted that Rome force Bourget to comply rigorously with the decree. This would strengthen the Seminary's position. Laflèche and Désautels opposed the Archbishop's interpretation. They maintained that the Roman document merely required a pro forma reversion to annexes until the State granted civil registers.

The third pontifical decree endorsed Bourget's version of the Roman sentence. It dealt a severe blow to the Seminary's aspirations, and finally sanctioned the new order. Wary of alienating Taschereau, however, the Congregation retained him to oversee the latest sentence.

Bourget's success was limited. He fought a holding action against Taschereau. In this struggle, Rome vindicated the bishop. However, the Metropolitan had checked Bourget's effort to secure de facto civil recognition for all canonical parishes. The Propaganda apparently condoned this action since Taschereau continued to be Apostolic Delegate. Clearly, the controversy was far from over.

* * *

The second pontifical decree carried within itself the

seeds of controversy. Key articles, ambiguous in their phrasing, gave rise to conflicting interpretations. Joseph Désautels molded Bourget's understanding of the document. In the course of his Roman mission, he had established a close rapport with the Cardinal Ponente, Monaco-LaValetta, and received special favors from him. Monaco leaked the decree to the envoy soon after it was published and interpreted the sentence to Bourget's advantage. The Ponente apparently told Désautels that before submitting the final draft for the Propaganda's ratification, he had had a change of heart and made recommendations departing from the Archbishop's report.¹ This explained why the judgement was so much more favorable than Désautels thought on July 25. Bourget's representative also collaborated closely with Canon de Angelis whose broad knowledge of canon law enlightened obscure points in the decree. Consequently, Désautels considered himself well-authorized to dictate Bourget's conduct in this matter. In fact, he warned the bishop that "l'on serait ici très mécontent si Votre Grandeur donnait à ce Décret une interprétation différente de celle que je viens de donner...."² The "on" apparently referred to Monaco, de Angelis, and the Minutante.

Taschereau, of course, regarded himself as best qualified to interpret the pontifical judgement. His

1 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 18 août 1872.

2 Ibid., 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 16 sept. 1872.

twin titles of Apostolic Delegate and author of the dismemberment report supported his claim. Nevertheless, Désautels, inspired by de Angelis, told Bourget to ignore the Archbishop. Taschereau was but a passive executor of Rome's will. He had no mission to meddle in his suffragan's business. Nor was Bourget obliged to justify his conduct to the Metropolitan: "S'il arrivait parfois que Mgr. l'Arch. voulût s'imposer, que Mgr. de Mtl. (pardonnez l'expression) l'envoie se promener sans cérémonie, car ... il n'y a rien à attendre de ce côté-là."³

The first article of the decree caused the greatest problems. It stipulated that the canonical parishes, while remaining true parishes and preserving distinct boundaries, would be called annexes and their pastors, curates, until the State legitimized them. Did the second decree therefore repudiate the first, or merely confirm it? Were canonical parishes to be reduced to annexes in fact or in name only?

Désautels affirmed that the Propaganda's decision concurred with the first decree and with Bourget's operations.

Ce nom de succursales est donné aux paroisses ... de la même manière que Votre Grandeur l'avait fait dans le Décret d'érection et non autrement. La Congrégation n'a rien voulu changer aux Décrets d'érection.⁴

The Cardinals, he argued, adopted the same expedient as Bourget

³ ADSJQ, Désautels à Paré, 4 nov. 1872.

⁴ ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 16 sept. 1872.

had to acquire State registers, that of designating canonical parishes as annexes for civil purposes. "C'est à ceux qui prétendraient que ces Succursales sont ... plus qu'un nom, donné à de véritables paroisses, à dire ce qu'elles sont de plus."⁵

Taschereau saw it altogether differently. He believed that his suffragan should reduce all parishes to annexes so that there would be one canonical and civil pastor for the entire city. The Propaganda, he insisted, considered this to be the only method to overcome such obstacles as the Fabrique debt and civil registers. Bourget could then issue a purely canonical decree designating a rector and a specific territory for each annex. This episcopal act, however, could not impinge upon the civil prerogatives of Notre Dame's pastor, unless serious inconvenience resulted. Thus, there would be

pratiquement et de fait dans la ville autant de paroisses que V.G. le jugera à propos et il n'y manquera que des noms de paroisses et de Curés, en attendant que soient levées, soit par une loi nouvelle, soit par une décision des Tribunaux, toutes les difficultés qui empêchent l'érection civile.⁶

Bourget's lawyers advised him against this course. By following Taschereau's prescriptions, the bishop would seriously prejudice procedures for civil recognition, which were nearing an end for three of his parishes. Moreover, if Bourget's opponents had the slightest ill-will, they

5 ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 16 sept. 1872.

6 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) Taschereau à Bourget, 4 sept. 1872.

could compromise all of his achievements and reinstate the old order. The prelate's advocates also wondered whether Bourget could alter the status of his parishes unilaterally. "... Ce serait blesser les droits acquis de tiers qui, après avoir demandé et obtenu cette sentence de l'Ordinaire, s'en sont servi pour réclamer de l'autorité civile certains avantages ... auxquels ils ne peuvent prétendre sans elle."⁷

When Bourget presented him with these objections, Taschereau rather incredibly confessed to having assumed that the hearings for civil recognition had been dropped. The Archbishop recognized that the legal opinions were well-founded, but clung to his principles. Accordingly, he recommended that Bourget maintain the decrees of erection for those parishes seeking civil recognition, but that all other parishes revert to annexes.⁸

The bishop of Montreal believed that this position exposed the Metropolitan's penchant for Sulpician special status. The Propaganda, Bourget noted, had rejected this solution in both pontifical decrees, even though St-Sulpice had offered generous concessions to non-Sulpician parishes in return. Rome wanted all parishes on the same footing.⁹

On August 21, 1872, Judge Berthelot awarded civil registers to three non-Sulpician parishes and thereby

⁷ ACAM, 901.136 Pagnuelo, Trudel et Taillon à Bourget, 24 août 1872. Opinion Pagnuelo, Trudel et Taillon, 23 août 1872.

⁸ Ibid., 901.138 Taschereau à Bourget, 28 août 1872.

⁹ Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Taschereau, 30 août 1872.

recognized the canonical pastor's right to keep them. This decision produced another confrontation between Bourget and Taschereau. What did the pontifical decree mean by legitimation of canonical parishes? Even before hearing of Berthelot's judgement, Désautels transmitted Monaco's opinion that a judicial decision would satisfy the terms of the decree.¹⁰ Article I would therefore remain a dead letter.¹¹ Taschereau, while delighted with Berthelot's decision, emphasized that it did not remove the major impediment to civil recognition, the Fabrique debt, and consequently, did not constitute legitimation of Montreal's parishes.¹²

Bourget contested the Archbishop's interpretation. He sought to explain the term 'legitimation' by placing it in the context of his drawn-out debate with Sulpician attorneys. They had always argued, he maintained, that in the eyes of the State, those born in canonical parishes were bastards, and those married there, concubines; that annexes alone had a right to civil registers. "La conclusion était facile de ces prémisses si infidèlement posées. Le St-Siège, qui ignorait que les paroisses canoniques ont encore plus de droit aux Registres que les succursales, l'a tout naturellement tirée..."¹³

10 ADSJQ, Désautels à Paré, 21 août 1872.

11 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 16 sept. 1872.

12 Ibid., 901.138 Taschereau à Bourget, 28 août 1872.

13 Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Taschereau, 30 août 1872.

Now that civil registers were granted, problems about the legitimacy of curial functions no longer existed.

It was not without certain reservations that Bourget followed Désautels' directives. The bishop wanted more guarantees that his envoy's explanations were authoritative. Désautels replied that only a general congregation of the Propaganda could give an official interpretation of the decree. The Sulpicians and the Archbishop would, in that event, take the opportunity to reopen the entire question.¹⁴ Désautels therefore advised against such a move.

The pontifical sentence was but one part, albeit fundamental, of a larger polemic which absorbed the Quebec Church in the late summer and autumn of 1872. At issue was a new conception of Church-State relations and, more particularly, of the alliance between clerics and politicians. Every important ecclesiastical question seemed related to this central concern. It determined the majority of bishops, for example, to refuse Bourget a successor in his lifetime. This debate sparked by the Nouveau Monde's policy on New Brunswick schools, rekindled passionate year-old arguments over the programme catholique and the role of Catholic journalism.

Cartier's electoral defeat rubbed salt in fresh wounds. Most bishops and the Conservative press held Montreal's ultramontane newspapers responsible for it. An excruciated

14 ACAM, 901.086 Désautels à Bourget, 2 oct. 1872.

Charles Larocque wrote to the defeated Minister of Public Works: "Laissez-moi vous dire amicalement que je me sens humilié, quand je considère d'où est parti le coup qui a réussi à vous atteindre."¹⁵ The bishop of St-Hyacinthe immediately cancelled his subscription to the Nouveau Monde.

The hierarchy sought effective means to restrain Bourget and his diocesan newspaper. The bishop had, after all, issued two mandements in the summer of 1872, interpreted by many as prejudicial to the Macdonald administration. One attacked the thesis that religion had nothing to do with politics. The other affirmed that federal politicians were obliged to redress Catholic rights in New Brunswick. Accordingly, the bishops unanimously resolved, Bourget being absent, that they would not make public pronouncements on 'provincial matters', either personally or through their press, without first consulting their colleagues.¹⁶ This delay-mechanism, they hoped, would at least diffuse, if not paralyse, the confrontation policies upon which Bourget seemed bent.

The bishop of Montreal deplored his associates' servility to politicians. By their silence and their quiet compromises, they disregarded Catholic principles so as not to embarrass those in authority.¹⁷ Bourget believed

15 ADSH, Registre de lettres VI, C. Larocque à Cartier, 1 sept. 1872.

16 ACAM, 752.704 Taschereau à Bourget, 10 sept. 1872.

17 Ibid., 901.061 Bourget à Désautels, 2 août 1872

that, since the Confederation debates, the Archdiocese of Quebec especially had sought to preserve close ties with government whatever the costs. While gallican newspapers had free rein in the capital, the ultramontane press was muzzled. While a clique of liberal priests basked in the Archbishop's favor, a large segment of the clergy lived in constant dread of canonical censure. While Laval promoted professors propagating pernicious doctrines, the Séminaire de Québec banished defenders of orthodoxy.¹⁸ This double standard pervaded all archdiocesan policy. The bishop of St-Hyacinthe, for his part, "fait tant tous les jours pour nous asservir à la Puissance civile!"¹⁹ Larocque, the prelate contended, insisted that the hierarchy complaisantly and discreetly request legislative changes, as if the Church could not demand its rights.²⁰

What a contrast between the hierarchy's timorousness and Pius IX's eloquent courage!

Quand chaque jour les nouvelles ... nous apprennent les grandes et vertes leçons que ce généreux Pontife adresse aux Souverains, nous devons ... être encouragés à ne pas hésiter à rappeler, en bons termes, mais avec énergie, nos gouvernants à leur devoir.²¹

Bourget, therefore, declined to endorse the bishops' collective resolution unless they first dedicated themselves

18 ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à Laflèche, 28 sept. 1872.

19 Ibid., 901.061 Bourget à Désautels, 9 août 1872.

20 Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Taschereau, 16 oct. 1872.

21 Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Taschereau, 27 sept. 1872.

totally to the Syllabus. He well knew, however, that his colleagues would consider this an inopportune, indeed dangerous commitment. The spectacle of a divided episcopacy saddened the prelate. "Mais je regrettrais bien plus amèrement ... de demeurer comme un chien muet, en voyant le Syllabus ... relégué dans quelques coins de nos bibliothèques...."²²

At the same time, the bishop identified himself more than ever with the Nouveau Monde and with its censor, Godefroi Lamarche. Bourget emphasized the essential role of the Catholic press in a constitutional régime, that of enlightening public opinion on ecclesiastical rights and predisposing politicians to uphold these principles in the public arena.²³ The Nouveau Monde, he thought, fulfilled this task admirably. Its vigorous campaigns prevented the Code des Curés from becoming law and convinced the government to grant civil registers. The diocesan organ inspired the lay élite and especially the young to expound Catholic principles.²⁴

Bourget particularly sought to justify the Nouveau Monde's role in the New Brunswick Schools Question and in the federal election of 1872. His newspaper, he argued, did not agitate to defeat the outgoing administration. It merely stressed that voters were responsible for remedying

²² ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à Laflèche, 28 sept. 1872.

²³ Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Taschereau, 16 oct. 1872.

²⁴ Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Laflèche, 28 sept. 1872.
Bourget à Trudel, 4 oct. 1872.

the injustice against their New Brunswick brethren and that, consequently, they should require each candidate to make a public pronouncement on the issue. Politicians could easily disavow their parliamentary vote and thus meet the Nouveau Monde's criterion for reelection. "... C'est en effet ce qui est arrivé ici."²⁵ Bourget therefore disclaimed all responsibility for Cartier's defeat. In fact, when Labelle told his bishop "... qu'il trainait son autorité dans la boue, qu'il cachait sans cesse ses sottises sous sa mitre..."²⁶ by endorsing his newspaper's editorial policy, Bourget vigorously denied being opposed to Cartier and sincerely hoped for his reelection.

The bishop insisted that far from alienating politicians and provoking a much-feared Protestant reaction, the summer offensive had produced positive political results. Indeed, Hector Langevin, Cartier's heir-apparent, was willing to lead a reinvigorated conservative party under the banner of the programme catholique.²⁷ Since a militant press strengthened Catholic rights so effectively, the hierarchy should not hesitate to encourage it fully.

Whereas the bishop moved closer to the Nouveau Monde, he dissociated himself completely from La Minerve "... à cause des injures qu'elle ne cesse de verser sur le rédacteur en chef du Nouveau Monde, c'est-à-dire contre moi, et des

25 ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à Taschereau, 27 sept. 1872.

26 ANQ, Papiers Labelle, Correspondance "L", Labelle à inconnu, 21 août 1872.

27 ASTR, G. Lamarche à Laflèche, 12 oct. 1872.

préjugés de libéralisme dont elle fait une profession plus ouverte."²⁸ By toeing the party line, particularly on dismemberment and the schools question, it utterly discredited conservative principles and betrayed its French Catholic origins. Despite conciliatory overtures from the Conservative organ's editorial staff, Bourget promised to resubscribe to the newspaper when it again espoused Catholic ideas.²⁹

Meanwhile, Taschereau cancelled his subscription to the Nouveau Monde. The two episcopal sees were now totally alienated from each other. The Archbishop decried the immoderation imbuing the diocese of Montreal and its press. Bourget's zeal was well-meaning, but rash, misdirected, and ultimately dangerous. Taschereau illustrated this point by rebutting his colleague's charges about the Archdiocese's alleged collusion with politicians. The Archbishop and his staff were accused of sanctioning the civil code, instead of pressing the government to remove from it prescriptions contrary to canon law. Taschereau observed, however, that the code was intended to explain the law, not change it. Lobbying for amendments would therefore have been inappropriate. The Archdiocese was also criticized for failing to support the assault on the Code des Curés. This violent and unjust campaign was unleashed on the unfounded assumption that the legislature would enact the treatise as law. Was it wise

28 ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à Laflèche, 28 sept. 1872.

29 Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à A. Dansereau, Dionne et A. Decelles, 21 oct. 1872.

for the hierarchy to act on such fanciful rumors? Similarly, Taschereau was berrated for his refusal to endorse the programme catholique. The Archbishop asserted, however, that the manifesto was neither useful, necessary, nor innocuous, as Bourget contended. On the contrary, it incited a militant Protestant movement. Taschereau ended by arguing that all of Montreal's misguided acts "... finiraient infailliblement par amener le triomphe d'un parti, dont le passé et le présent ne sont guère rassurants."³⁰

Antonin Braun's Noces d'Or sermon in late October, while consummating the divorce between the two prelates, captured the essence of the controversy. The Jesuit's polemic against gallicanism and liberalism was directed against clerical subservience to politics, against combinations which sapped the Church's vital strength. The Jesuit lauded the independence of Montreal's bishop and his press. Although the language of the sermon was typically ultramontane, its meaning referred to the specific Quebec context. The homily also indicated the degree to which suspicion and misunderstanding prevailed among the hierarchy, since Taschereau and most of his colleagues believed that Bourget deliberately organized this sensational apologia.

In the midst of these polemics, Bourget tried to consolidate his civil gains and thus end his seven-year old controversy with St-Sulpice. Indications were favorable.

³⁰ ACAM, 295.099 Taschereau à Bourget, 20 oct. 1872.

By the end of October, all non-Sulpician pastors held State registers. Two weeks later, the civil commissioners recommended that the government formally recognize Notre Dame de Grâce parish, although some citizens appealed the earlier court decision quashing the quo warranto.

The bishop now decided to confront the Seminary. He ordered Sulpician pastors to request civil registers from Superior Court. He and Attorney General Ouimet had determined the procedures to be followed some months earlier. Bourget had insisted that the Quebec Cabinet Minister draft the forms in such a way as to recognize real pastors and parishes. Berthelot's August 21 judgement legally sanctioned this understanding. Bourget warned Sulpician pastors not to use the term 'rector' or 'parish annex' in their court petition. Such forms would contradict the bishop's actions as well as Cartier's persistent affirmation that Canadian law did not recognize 'parish annexes'.³¹ Finally, Bourget allowed the Seminary to oppose its pastors' petition in court.³²

The prelate encountered stiff resistance from both the Seminary and Taschereau. Alleging Bourget's failure to implement the second pontifical decree, the Sulpician pastors refused to sign his petition.³³ Instead, they asked Superior Court to grant them registers as canonical

31 ACAM, 355.101 Bourget à Baile, 1 nov. 1872.

32 Ibid., 355.101 Bourget aux cinqs curés Sulpiciens, 2 nov. 1872.

33 Ibid., RLB 20 Bourget à Baile, 30 oct. 1872.

pastors of parish-annexes. Their lawyer, J. A. Mousseau, substantiated their claim by publicizing the Roman sentence, which Bourget had until then kept secret.³⁴ Pagnuelo and H. F. Rainville defended factions within the Fabrique loyal either to the bishop or to the Seminary. The former maintained that the Court should award registers to pastors of canonical parishes.³⁵ The latter argued that dismemberment, especially the term 'parish-annex', was illegal.

The Sulpicians skillfully out-manoevred Bourget. Their chances of success were better than average: whether the court granted registers to annexes of Notre Dame or refused them outright, the Seminary's interests would be upheld. These were enhanced, however, because Judge Robert Mackay, instead of Berthelot, heard the case. Mackay was overburdened with work and wanted a quick trial. Observed Pagnuelo, "Ce que je prévois de cet état de chose, c'est un anet indigeste, précipité, et qui probablement ne satisfera personne...."³⁶ Seventeen days after the case opened, Mackay denied the Sulpicians civil registers, basing his judgement on arguments which they had used since 1865.

Concurrently, the Seminary challenged the bishop's order before Taschereau. For Bourget, the appeal itself contradicted the Church's right to self-government.³⁷ The

³⁴ ASSM, Mémoire de J. A. Mousseau, A. Chapleau et Champagne sur les registres, 11 nov. 1872.

³⁵ ACAM, 752.704 Pagnuelo à Paré, 12 nov. 1872.

³⁶ Ibid., 752.706 Pagnuelo à Paré, 14 nov. 1872.

³⁷ Ibid., 901.138 Bourget à Taschereau, 15 nov. 1872.

Archbishop's obvious Sulpician bias, moreover, disqualified him from hearing the case. Nevertheless, Taschereau went ahead with proceedings and publicly summoned Bourget to appear before him. The bishop appealed to a higher tribunal in Rome.

Before the Holy See could come to grips with this latest confrontation, the provincial government intervened. Legislative action was imperative to remove the contradiction between Mackay and Berthelot's judgements. During the summer, Ouimet had cooperated fully with Bourget. But, faced with a struggle between the bishop on one side, the Sulpicians and Taschereau on the other, provincial politicians became more circumspect.

One solution to the judicial conflict lay in the extensive amendments to the statutes on parishes and fabriques which the hierarchy drafted in the summer. Taschereau had assumed that before their introduction in parliament, the bishop of Montreal would reduce his parishes to annexes. But, by the end of November, no one entertained any such illusions. Consequently, the Metropolitan was in no hurry to press for these amendments which, if sanctioned, would resolve the issue in Bourget's favor.

Added to Taschereau's reluctance was the episcopacy's general coolness to the legislation. Charles Larocque, who followed events in Montreal closely, believed that the bishops' bill might give rise to polemics "... que nous regretterions amèrement d'avoir soulevés par le seul motif

de chercher à améliorer un peu (et qui sait encore?) un état de choses qu'il est impossible de trouver mauvais dans l'ensemble...."³⁸ He and his colleagues were more concerned with ending scandalous controversies rocking the Quebec Church. To this end, both Larocque and Langevin urged Taschereau to leave for Rome. Bourget's appeal provided the Metropolitan with a pretext, if any were needed. He withdrew the bishops' bill and prepared to set sail.

The government was therefore left to resolve the matter on its own. Ouimet privately informed Trudel and Desjardins that he would introduce a straightforward bill, declaring that each priest, authorized by his bishop, had a right to civil registers. The legislation would also validate ecclesiastical records held in Montreal since 1867.³⁹ Bourget insisted on this formula because it alone was consonant with Berthelot's sentence.⁴⁰ Ouimet later made a statement in the House, renewing his intentions. Apparently, the chief clerk of the Assembly had even drafted a simple declaratory bill with two short clauses.⁴¹

Charles Larocque, who generally reflected his

38 ADSH, Registre Beloeil, Larocque à Taschereau, 20 nov. 1872.

39 ACAM, 752.704 A. Desjardins à G. Lamarche, 30 nov. 1872. ASJCF, 2046 Témoignage de F.X.A. Trudel sur la loi des registres, fin déc. 1872.

40 ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à Desjardins, 4 déc. 1872.

41 Ibid., 355.122 James Lonergan à Bourget, 14 déc. 1872.

Metropolitan's opinions on these questions, expressed grave reservations about a declaratory bill. Basically, he viewed Berthelot's judgement as "une complaisance extrajudiciaire" and Ouimet's actions as motivated by Christian, rather than solid judicial conviction.⁴² Bourget, he thought, merely used these men to thwart the pontifical decree.

Si parce qu'il y a une résistance imprévoyable à la loi du pays, qui dure même après une condamnation à Rome, quelqu'un peut avoir à souffrir ce n'est pas la faute de la loi, qui pourvoit aux intérêts qu'ils disent lésés! Céder à un cas semblable, c'est céder non à la pression mais à quelque chose de plus dangereux....⁴³

A declaratory bill would severely prejudice one party's interests and go against the wishes of the Holy See. It would allow Bourget to dismember parishes ad infinitum. The situation required special legislation legalizing a highly irregular state of affairs. Meanwhile, the Fabrique agitated against any bill which would affect its judicial or financial position within the civil parish.

On December 13, Ouimet sent Bourget the planned draft. The bishop found it utterly unacceptable. He argued that the government, instead of harmonizing contradictory judicial interpretations, was putting forth new legislation. This procedure in effect made dismemberment illegal. It contradicted Berthelot and Ouimet's actions and nullified the legal title under which Bourget's

⁴² ADSH, Beloeil I, C. Larocque à P. J. O. Chauveau, 30 nov. 1872.

⁴³ Ibid., Registre VI, C. Larocque à P. J. O. Chauveau, 8 déc. 1872.

parishes actually held civil registers. The bishop condemned the measure because it violated episcopal prerogatives.⁴⁴ He dispatched James Lonergan, a canonical pastor, to the provincial capital to push for a declaratory bill.

"L'espérance monte et tombe comme la marée",⁴⁵ noted Bourget's envoy after a few days' lobbying. The problem, he believed, was that the Attorney General wanted to please all parties. At first, Ouimet accepted Lonergan's amendments. A few days later, he dismissed them, urging the pastor "... de ne pas insister, que c'était le jeter dans une position à tout faire manquer, que les membres de Québec pourraient prendre ombrage."⁴⁶ Even pro-Bourget parliamentarians, Charles de Boucherville and J. H. Bellerose, urged the delegate to accept Ouimet's amended version, a compromise between a declaratory bill and the December 13 draft.

Ultimately, the Archdiocese determined the government's course. Before leaving for Rome, Taschereau had Ouimet promise that the proposed legislation would in no way alter the delicate balance between the antagonists in Montreal. Reminding the Attorney-General of his pledge, Grand Vicar Cazeau insisted that Ouimet introduce the December 13 draft. This version ensured the rights of the Seminary and the

44 ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à J. Lonergan, 13 déc. 1872.

45 Ibid., 752.704 J. Lonergan à Bourget, 21 déc. 1872.

46 Ibid., 752.704 J. Lonergan à Bourget, 18 déc. 1872.

Fabrique over the entire civil territory of Notre Dame. Bourget's partisans reacted strongly. Trudel threatened to resign. "Mr. Bellerose a jeté le bill avec la clause Cazeau (sic) à la face du Premier."⁴⁷ Rodrigue Masson and Louis Beaubien vigorously protested against the "Grand Vicar's bill".

Their opponents, however, were even more resolute. Lonergan observed the strong anti-Montreal bias in the legislature. Rabid anti-programmistes made sure that Cazeau's will became law. For this purpose, Lucien Turcotte, professor at Laval, and L. H. Huot, both editors of Le Canadien, collaborated closely with Choquette, the Fabrique's secretary, Mousseau, and Jetté. Huot warned the Attorney General

... s'il n'admettait pas l'amendement rédigé par Turcotte, il violait la promesse faite à l'Archevêque, que le Canadien ferait admettre cette indigne conduite et que nous ne lacherions que lorsque lui-même aurait lâché son portefeuille.

Je vis Chauveau et je lui déclarai que j'en faisais une question de confiance dans le Gouvernement...⁴⁸

The journalist proclaimed his solidarity with Taschereau against the programmistes. He estimated that a majority of fifteen members would defeat the government if it chose to follow Bourget.

The bishop of Montreal was given an unpalatable ultimatum. Either he accept the Cazeau bill, or the

47 ACAM, 752.704 J. Lonergan à Bourget, 19 déc. 1872.

48 ANQ, Papiers Labelle, "A à C" L. H. Huot à Labelle, 2 janv. 1872 (sic).

government would retract it. Premier Chauveau even spoke of resignation. The bishop adopted a very astute tactic. He neither accepted nor rejected the legislation. He was determined not to give the administration an easy escape. Thus, Bourget left the Cabinet full responsibility for the measure, while he proclaimed his adamant opposition.⁴⁹ To the end, he refused to compromise his principles, but had to bow to more powerful forces.

The aftermath of the Cazeau bill left Bourget's followers angry and defeated. Their bitterness was directed at Ouimet for having betrayed the bishop of Montreal. The Attorney General had months earlier written a brief refuting Cartier and supporting Bourget's legal position on dismemberment. He had helped obtain civil registers and promised, both publicly and privately, a declaratory bill. Suddenly came the about-face. Even then the minister admitted that the bishop was right.⁵⁰ But, Ouimet's behavior was especially disreputable because he neglected to inform Bourget of his commitment to the Archbishop. It was Cazeau who disclosed the politician's promise to Lonergan.⁵¹

Trudel was utterly disgusted with politics. "... Ces tristes intrigues, ces dégoûtantes injustices m'affligent

49 ACAM, RLB 20 Bourget à J. Lonergan, 21 déc. 1872.

50 ASJCF, Témoignage Trudel, fin déc. 1872.

51 ACAM, 752.704 J. Lonergan à Bourget, 21 déc. 1872.

profondément, me font desespérer (sic) de nos amis et chefs politique (sic)."⁵² The bishop, for his part, repeated Trudel's words to Ouimet, an obvious intimation that he shared the programmiste's sentiments.

Bourget and his partisans were also bitter with Taschereau. The Archbishop, they maintained, insisted on new legislation because he did not want to lose face in Rome. A declaratory bill would have contradicted his assertion that dismemberment was illegal. The Metropolitan's machinations were certainly successful, but at what cost to the Church's rights!⁵³

As the new year dawned, all canonical parishes obtained civil registers by virtue of the Cazeau bill. Superior Court, however, awarded them to Sulpician pastors as officials authorized by their bishop to perform the sacraments. "Chose singulière!", commented Bourget, "c'est parce qu'ils sont Curés que ces Sulpiciens peuvent faire des baptêmes ... comme l'attestent leurs lettres d'institution. Mais voilà qu'on affecte de méconnaître le principe de leur juridiction, pour admettre cette juridiction."⁵⁴

In Rome, Désautels and Laflèche were already busy vindicating Bourget's cause. At first, they had to fight a rear-guard action. The bishop's refusal to cooperate with Taschereau's tribunal and his failure to make the

52 ACAM, 752.704 Trudel à C. S. Rodier, 19 déc. 1872.

53 Ibid., 901.061 Bourget à G. Ouimet, 29 déc. 1872.

54 Ibid., 901.061 Bourget à Désautels, 3 janv. 1873.

pontifical decree public deeply annoyed Mgr. Simeoni and some other Propaganda officials. Coming on the heels of the Jesuits' university bill, these seemingly inexplicable actions lent weight to contentions that Bourget was un-submissive, headstrong, and possibly enfeebled by old age and illness. Even the pope seemed to give credence to these rumors.⁵⁵

Bourget's delegates then reiterated their conviction that dismemberment was not a purely local or diocesan matter,

... mais elle (met) en péril la liberté de l'Eglise dans tout le Canada, en faisant poser aussi crument, par le premier Politique du pays, le principe tyrannique de la Suprématie de l'Etat sur l'Eglise, jusqu'à dans l'administration des sacremens.⁵⁶

Two schools of thought confronted each other on this vital problem. The one, comprising bishops and a small minority of the lower clergy, constantly accomodated itself to politicians. It sought to reconcile diametrically opposed theses and refused to champion Catholic rights, always alleging that such a course was inopportune. It sought to restrain discussion of fundamental and timely issues in the clerical press and thus deprived the people of inspiration and enlightenment. In Europe, this school was known as liberal Catholic.

The other, numerically far superior, actively promoted the Church's freedom of action "... sans se soucier des exigences de certains hommes politiques, ni se laisser

55 ACAM, 901.136 J. N. Maréchal à Bourget, 30 avr. 1875.

56 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) Laflèche à Désautels, sans date.

intimider par les opinions de quelques juristes gallicans attardés." This school bitterly contested Cartier's "gallicanisme effronté" during dismemberment and, despite Taschereau's resistance, emerged victorious from this confrontation. "... Toute la popularité du grand Homme d'Etat est venu (sic) se briser, à Montreal, contre la fermeté de ce digne évêque, comme un vase d'argile sur le roc."⁵⁷

Désautels and Laflèche maintained that the Church's success would be even more spectacular, if the hierarchy were united. Thanks to the programme catholique and to the zeal of the Catholic press, politicians of both parties would eagerly give the Church the widest possible freedom. Unfortunately, some of the staunchest opponents of ecclesiastical rights were bishops. Others were simply timorous or ambivalent. The previous session of the legislature corroborated these contentions.⁵⁸

Bourget's delegates were at a loss to explain why the Quebec Church was so divided and thus fell back on traditional interpretations and hearsay. They affirmed that Montreal's sudden burgeoning provoked Quebec City's deep hostility. This rivalry then shifted to the episcopal sees. Taschereau especially resented that the diocese of Montreal was the richest and most important of all the others combined. Why did the other sees invariably

57 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) Mémoire Laflèche, 31 janv. 1873.

58 ASTR, Pagnuelo à Laflèche, 7 déc. 1873.

side with Quebec City? Rumor had it that Taschereau allied himself to the other bishops by making compacts with them. Thus, he assured Guigues that the Quebec portion of his diocese would not be dismembered in his lifetime. Larocque was promised that, on Bourget's death, the wealthiest part of his see, on the south shore, would be annexed to St-Hyacinthe. Langevin was guaranteed Bourget's succession.⁵⁹

These reasons explained the general climate of hostility in the Quebec Church. But, they failed to reveal why the inevitable polarization occurred on matters of Church and State. Here, Bourget's envoys turned to those ties which ran deeply in a small highly integrated society like French Canada: those of blood. Seven members of Taschereau's family, one brother, three cousins, and three nephews held positions in the judiciary and government. Langevin's brother was federal minister of Public Works and three other close relatives were public servants. The bishop of Rimouski also had several young nephews who would soon aspire to high positions. Besides these bonds of kinship, some prelates had close friends in the political establishment. Taschereau and Langevin were intimates of Chauveau, while Larocque and Guigues shared a warm relationship with Cartier. These alliances, it was rumored, facilitated the episcopacy's complaisant and indulgent attitude to politicians. Laflèche and Désautels argued that Bourget shunned such contacts and

⁵⁹ ACAM, 901.043 Déclaration anonyme (Désautels), Rome, 21 janv. 1873.

remained faithful to Roman principles.⁶⁰

The bishop's representatives made quick headway in Rome. Désautels' natural talent for negotiation impressed Laflèche. The pastor of Varennes also enjoyed a good reputation with the Cardinals. He was permitted to visit the Propaganda twice weekly, a privilege which augured well for Bourget's cause. Moreover, Laflèche and Désautels forged close links with influential forces. The Minutante, Pierantozzi, for instance, was favorably inclined to Bourget. De Angelis continued to serve the bishop of Montreal faithfully. He unreservedly condemned Taschereau's conduct and assured the envoys that the Archbishop would receive a well-deserved lesson for his public summons to Bourget. The Jesuits were also devoted to the bishop, despite the violent polemics of Montreal's Catholic press.⁶¹

Encouraged by this support, Bourget's delegates renewed Désautels' vast summer offensive to vindicate the bishop's life-work. First, they deferred the Code des Curés to the Index. They then solicited de Angelis' opinion on controversial questions, intending to use his answers as official confirmations of Bourget's position. The professor affirmed that the hierarchy was obliged to protest against articles of the civil code whether or not they expected to obtain redress. He believed that the

60 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) Mémoire Laflèche, 31 janv. 1873.
ACAM, 901.043 Déclaration anonyme, 21 janv. 1873.

61 ACAM, 295.104 Laflèche à Bourget, 19 janv. 1873.
Laflèche à Bourget, 13 janv. 1873. Laflèche à Bourget,
1 fév. 1873.

bishops who inspired the programme catholique should continue to encourage its adherents. Finally, on New Brunswick Schools, he maintained that Catholic Cabinet ministers and members of parliament had to support, in Cabinet and in the House, repeal of the provincial legislation.⁶²

The Archbishop also sought to explain the conflicts within the Quebec Church. He attributed them to the character quirks of some suffragans, but did not underestimate the consequences. On the contrary, with three other bishops, he urged Rome to put a stop to the excesses of Montreal's press. Taschereau considered that public opinion was incompetent to assess ecclesiastical problems.⁶³

On dismemberment, the Metropolitan insisted that all parishes be reduced to annexes of Notre Dame until the courts judged the quo warranto appeal. If the sentence favored Bourget, his parishes could then obtain civil recognition. The Sulpicians, however, should preserve their annexes. A dismemberment with rigidly fixed boundaries, he repeated, would destroy their community life. Moreover, it would contradict the provision in the second Roman decree that St-Patrick and St-Ann be national parishes, that is without defined territories.⁶⁴

In mid-March 1873, Rome again wanted to temper the highly charged and embittered atmosphere in its ecclesiastical

62 ACAM, RCD 42 Laflèche à de Angelis, 19 fév. 1873.

63 APFR, SC 1872-74 Taschereau à Barnabò, 13 janv. 1873.
Taschereau à Barnabò, 17 fév. 1873.

64 Ibid., Acta (mars 1873) Taschereau à Barnabò, 7 janv. 1873.

province. The third pontifical decree was only part of a general policy to secure a moratorium between feuding factions. The Cardinals also judged other contentious issues like the newspaper controversy, Bourget's succession, and of course, the university question. They adopted a pragmatic approach to all these problems, trying to foster understanding through compromise. For instance, the prelates deplored the excesses of the Quebec press without specifying any newspaper or journalistic school and ordered that public polemics on religious issues cease.⁶⁵ They also decided to give the bishop of Montreal a successor, despite objections from the majority of his colleagues. However, their choice fell neither on Bourget's first candidate, Octave Paré, nor on Taschereau and Langevin's favorite, Bruno Guigues. Instead, they picked C. E. Fabre. The prospect that Rome might designate Paré positively terrified Taschereau, Langevin, and Larocque, for they believed that he would surely follow in Bourget's footsteps. Fabre inspired no such fears. The worst they could say of him was that he lacked learning and the administrative ability to handle such a large diocese.⁶⁶

The decree on dismemberment broadly favored Bourget, dealt a severe blow to the Sulpicians, and appeased Taschereau. Article I specified that the first and second Roman sentences were concordant. They both intended to

65 ACAM, 780.034 Bourget à Taschereau, 16 avr. 1873.

66 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) Taschereau à Barnabò, 19 janv. 1873.

create genuine parishes with real pastors at their head. Consequently, Bourget was ordered to issue a new decree of erection for each canonical parish, encompassing all the stipulations of his previous ordonnances and of the three pontifical sentences. The second and third clauses emphasized the principle of territoriality by making the boundaries of St-Patrick and St-Ann coterminous with their nearest French-speaking parish. Rome asked St-Sulpice to submit to these realities and emphasized the futility of further appeals.

The Propaganda also sought to conciliate the Archbishop whose recommendations it repudiated. Taschereau was therefore designated to supervise the execution of this latest sentence. Bourget would present him the revised decrees for his approval. The Congregation also reprimanded Désautels for asking Taschereau to make amends for his public summons to Bourget.

Finally, Cardinal Monaco was authorized to interpret the decree should further disagreements arise between the Metropolitan and his suffragan.⁶⁷

Before leaving Rome, Laflèche and Désautels obtained further explanations of the decree from Monaco. The Cardinal stated that Bourget would have to revise all his decrees of erection, including that of Notre Dame. He believed that the bishop could create fabriques in his own territory immediately, but that he would have to wait

67 APFR, Acta (mars 1873) troisième décret sur le démembrement, 11-13 mars 1873.

until tempers cooled before proceeding in the Sulpician parishes. Finally, Monaco declared that further appeals to civil courts were strictly forbidden.⁶⁸

The delegates were jubilant. Désautels wrote, "... (La décision de Rome) est tellement positive que je ne vois pas où les Sulpiciens pourraient trouver encore un point qui leur serait d'appui pour continuer leur opposition." The Archbishop, he considered, had suffered a humiliating rout: he would think twice before intervening in Montreal's affairs again.⁶⁹

* * *

The second pontifical decree became ineffective partly because two authorities emerged to interpret it: the Archbishop was officially mandated; the ponente and minutante were informal, but no less informed sources. However, a deeper reason lay in Taschereau's partiality for Sulpician special status. This was undoubtedly the major factor in his recommending that dismemberment occur without creating distinct parishes, but with annexes having a defined territory and de facto pastor.

Although Article I of the decree resembled this proposal quite closely, there was one striking and fundamental difference. It stipulated that canonical parishes

68 ACAM, RCD 42 Explications du décret par le Cardinal Monaco, 19 mars 1873.

69 Ibid., RCD 42 Désautels à Bourget, 24 mars 1873. This last part of the draft letter was struck out and presumably not included in the official version.

would remain real parishes and their pastors, true pastors and therefore confirmed the first Roman sentence. Nevertheless, the Propaganda adopted a temporary expedient to overcome the problems with the State by ordering that parishes be called annexes until they were legitimized (quo usque legitimentur). Rome used this device to help the bishop of Montreal obtain civil registers, as article I stated.

Taschereau's proposals for implementing the decree contradicted this first clause. He suggested that all parishes be reduced to annexes so that, both civilly and canonically, there would be one pastor and one parish in Montreal. Moreover, the rectors of the annexes could not interfere with the civil rights of Notre Dame's curé. This meant that the latter would retain his old prerogative to perform curial functions throughout the city and suburbs. The Archbishop's proviso that each annex have a defined territory and rector attenuated the conflict with the pontifical decree, but did not remove it. Instead, Taschereau contradicted Cartier and Beaudry's legal opinions, which he professed to follow. Had not these lawyers maintained that annexes could not have fixed boundaries? Had they not insisted that a canonical pastor could not be dependent upon the civil curé? Was it now possible that a secular priest, called rector, could be subject to the Sulpician pastor of Notre Dame?

Taschereau's version of the decree, with all its

incongruities, was deliberately tailored for Sulpician special status. It permitted Notre Dame's curé to perform curial functions within the Seminary's five parishes and Bourget to seek civil sanction for his suburban annexes. Meanwhile, state authorities would, in their own interest, turn a blind eye to any possible irregularities since they also stood to lose from this drawn-out conflict, as the programme catholique showed. When the Archbishop insisted that all parishes, except those seeking civil recognition revert to annexes, his bias manifested itself. It became more blatant in Rome when he explicitly requested that Sulpician parishes remain annexes.

In the ongoing game of playing off civil and ecclesiastical authorities, the Seminary also contradicted itself. Sulpician pastors refused to subscribe to Bourget's procedure for obtaining civil registers. Assuming that they believed his petition to be canonically incorrect, these priests ought to have petitioned Superior Court as rectors of annexes to be perfectly consonant with the pontifical decree. Instead, they used the title 'canonical pastors of annexes' which clashed with their own legal advisers' position and with Bourget's contention that these terms referred to two different realities, one spiritual, the other, temporal, and should therefore never be used in combination.

The bishop of Montreal had always maintained that his episcopal ordonnances created real parishes. In negotiating

with Ouimet for civil registers, he insisted that the State recognize this fact and thus eliminate ambiguities which encouraged opposition. Berthelot's judgement ended the status of legal limbo in which Bourget's parishes found themselves since 1866. In fact, it legitimized them and permitted them to function normally. These parishes were deprived of one civil right only: the fabrique which could force all inhabitants to share common debts. Thus, the first article of the pontifical decree was fulfilled.

At this point, Bourget was faced with a choice. He knew of Taschereau's interpretation of the Roman sentence and of Sulpician resistance to his civil procedures. He wanted the Propaganda to confirm that his understanding of the decree was correct, but Désautels indicated the pitfalls of such a course. The bishop therefore decided to confront St-Sulpice and, in so doing, left himself open to an ultimate political settlement.

The civil registers bill did not resolve a question of principle. The fact that, in its aftermath, Bourget's priests held registers as pastors, while the Sulpicians kept theirs as officials authorized by their bishop amply proved this point. The legislation merely illustrated the political capital which could be drawn from the traditional alliance between clerics and politicians. In this power struggle, the antagonists were unevenly matched. Bourget's closest and surest contact in the legislature was F. X. A. Trudel. Ouimet, although well-meaning, was weak.

The bishop's humble origins and especially his attitude to those in authority did not win him political friends.

The wealth and social prominence of individuals like Taschereau and institutions like St-Sulpice, on the other hand, brought them in close contact with government leaders, Cartier and Chauveau for instance. They cultivated these relationships assiduously. Moreover, their extreme caution when making pronouncements on public issues served the interests of those in authority. In their confrontation with Bourget, Taschereau and St-Sulpice could count on the premier's personal support and on all anti-programmiste forces who had a score to settle with the bishop. The outcome again indicated the political insignificance of 'ultra-montanism'.

The bishop of Montreal characterized as gallican those alliances which needlessly compromised ecclesiastical interests. Gallicanism, in its strictest sense, though, did not exist in Canada since no government followed a systematic and coherent policy to subject the Church to the State. Nevertheless, a tradition did evolve in the Canadian Church, and especially within the hierarchy, to collaborate closely with ruling parties which were identified with established authority.

Bourget observed that Catholicism was being poorly served by this close rapport with the civil power. First, St-Sulpice called upon Cartier to stop the bishop's canonical operations. Second, legislation passed since

Confederation showed an alarming trend to arbitrary State interference in ecclesiastical affairs. Yet, the majority of Quebec bishops seemed disinclined to rectify the situation. In addition, he maintained that the Church was no longer supporting constituted authority, but a partisan faction in power, which pursued its own selfish welfare and exploited its alliance with the hierarchy to this end.

Bourget and his followers struggled to regain the Church's independence from these compromising partisan connections: to remind politicians of their duty and to have the hierarchy evaluate critically the government's performance. A new style was necessary to achieve these objectives. The old ways had not effectively protected the Church's rights. Elitism was discarded. No longer would ecclesiastical leaders quietly lobby with public men in the antechambers of power. Instead, they would foster a Catholic press which would unambiguously enunciate its principles so that enlightened public opinion could pressure governments to promote Catholic rights. For Bourget and his disciples, Europe provided stunning symbols of this new style: Pius IX who boldly and candidly proclaimed the truth to cynical princes hungry for grandeur and power; Louis Veuillot who maintained a strict independence from party politics and unflinchingly defended Catholic doctrine at the risk of incurring the wrath of the mighty.

This new style also coincided with nationalist

aspirations. First, politics was not exclusively conceived as an accomodation between various interest groups. From time to time, principles intervened in the process. This necessitated that public men put their biases aside and promote the general welfare. Second, an independent press provided a popular base to advance these principles. Finally, by upholding ecclesiastical autonomy, Bourget and his followers tried to preserve an essential French Canadian institution from the partisanship which contaminated every sector of life in the latter nineteenth-century.

The Propaganda, as noted above, approached Canadian problems pragmatically. The Cardinals effectively reinforced the traditional authoritarian and arbitrary system in which the leaders of Church and State privately composed, a system perhaps indispensable to the former, but certainly advantageous to the latter. Moreover, they undermined the nationalist dimension of Bourget's movement.

By enjoining that all public discussion on religious issues cease, Rome muzzled Montreal's Catholic press which constantly applied principles to social issues. Quebec City newspapers, on the other hand, sedulous echoes of the party line, could resume their task unhampered by the barbs of the Nouveau Monde. Thus, the Propaganda removed the popular base from Bourget's movement. Similarly, the choice of an auxiliary bishop fell on a man whose social origins brought him closer to Taschereau and Langevin, than to Bourget, and whose temperament resembled more that of

Larocque and Guigues. No member of the hierarchy expressed ideological objections to Fabre. Finally, by retaining Taschereau as papal legate in the dismemberment dispute, Rome appeared to condone his active political intervention on the Sulpicians' behalf. Thus, while Bourget won the battle of 1873, the outcome of the war was very much in doubt.

CHAPTER VIII

LA DETTE, VOILA L'ENNEMI!

The final phase of dismemberment confirmed Sulpician special status, at least in the civil sphere. St-Sulpice maintained administrative unity of their five parishes as well as exclusive cemetery rights. Bourget on the other hand secured civil recognition for the other six parishes and for subsequent dismemberments. While the government, therefore, sanctioned, if not the legality, at least the necessity of the bishop's operations, an exception was still made for St-Sulpice.

In 1873, Bourget discarded the defensive posture into which Taschereau had forced him. For the next three years, he made a final and concerted effort to standardize parish government in Montreal. The key to this goal was the debt. Its existence, which the second pontifical decree took for granted, was never clearly established either by Taschereau or St-Sulpice. To Bourget, the debt symbolized Sulpician resistance. Once the myth was destroyed, dismemberment would be consummated. The bishop therefore concentrated all his energies on demolishing this citadel of opposition. Fabre pursued these policies after acceding to the see of Montreal. Thus, the controversy, although bearing Bourget's unmistakable imprint, clearly transcended personalities.

During these years, the Seminary exploited the debt to block implementation of pontifical decrees, slow down civil recognition, and preserve its territorial integrity. The Sulpicians continued appropriating the Fabrique's annual income, but refused to disclose when and how the debt would be liquidated. However, circumstances were becoming less favorable to them. First, they lost a valuable ally, as Rome discharged Taschereau of his duties. Then, a new administration in Quebec City, headed by de Boucherville, seemed more anxious to appease the bishop of Montreal.

Rome sanctioned special status, despite expedients which the Sulpicians regarded as heavy blows. The Propaganda, for instance, designated the Fabrique to manage parish property which the Seminary legally owned and ordered a thorough investigation of the debt. The Cardinals, however, largely ignored the report which condemned the Seminary for grossly mismanaging parish revenues and recommended that special status be abolished. Instead, they allowed St-Sulpice eighteen months to refute the report and finally deferred the entire question to the apostolic delegate, Bishop George Conroy.

* * *

The events following the third pontifical decree were almost an exact replay of those occurring the previous summer and fall. The bishops of Quebec City and Montreal disagreed

about how to amend the decrees of erection. Taschereau rejected Bourget's drafts because they did not explicitly recognize the cemetery monopoly nor Sulpician property rights in dismembered parishes. He also contended that his suffragan contradicted specific provisions of the three Roman sentences.¹

Bourget justified his revisions arguing that he followed Monaco's instructions faithfully. Frustrated with Taschereau's constant intervention in dismemberment, Bourget asked the Propaganda to relieve the papal legate of his mandate. Désautels was again sent to Rome to press for this demand. The bishop also offered the Pope his resignation.²

These disagreements soon shifted to the political scene. In June, Court of Queen's Bench sustained an earlier judgement quashing the quo warranto. The new provincial premier, Gédéon Ouimet, decided to hear the parties one last time before submitting a recommendation on civil recognition to the Lieutenant-Governor. L. A. Jetté represented Rousselot and the Fabrique. He repeated the line of argument which Mousseau used before Judge Mackay: Bourget's deliberate refusal to obey the Holy See made State recognition impossible.

To support his contention, he cited Taschereau's

1 APFR, Acta (déc. 1873) Taschereau à Bourget, 21 août 1873.

2 Ibid., 901.036 Mémoire Bourget à Pie IX, 21 août 1873.

opinion that the decree erecting Notre Dame de Grâce had to acknowledge the cemetery monopoly. This was a prerequisite to further civil procedures. Moreover, Jetté maintained that the parish debt which the second pontifical sentence acknowledged was a serious obstacle to recognition.

Trudel and Pagnuelo defended the parishioners of Notre Dame de Grâce. They held that the Fabrique's case was totally irrelevant. The cemetery monopoly concerned Church discipline alone, and was therefore of no interest to civil authority. As for the debt, they argued that the officials solely authorized to judge this matter held the Fabrique, not the parish, responsible for liquidating it. Consequently, there was no impediment to civil recognition.³

Once again, the premier was torn between opposing forces. In late September, the inhabitants of Notre Dame de Grâce publicly protested against the government's inertia.⁴ A delegation headed for Quebec City to push for civil recognition. They apparently found the Lieutenant-Governor receptive, but, despite their explanations, the cabinet was still preoccupied with Bourget's failure to guarantee the cemetery monopoly.⁵ The Nouveau Monde fully backed the delegates and threatened to overturn the administration. In fact, it tried unsuccessfully to defeat Aldéric Ouimet,

³ APFR, 355.123 Mémoire Pagnuelo à Trudel, 6 août 1873.

⁴ Ibid., 355.123 Requête des francs-tenanciers de Notre Dame de Grâce au Gouvernement, 25 sept. 1873.

⁵ Ibid., 355.123 Maréchal et ses paroissiers à Bourget, 24 oct. 1873.

the premier's cousin, who was then running for the Conservatives in a federal byelection.⁶ Bourget was himself disillusioned with the government's refusal to recognize Church rights.

"... Ce n'est pas pour le parti conservateur, le bon moyen de conserver ses amis et de s'en faire des nouveaux."⁷

Taschereau and his advisors were convinced that Bourget was trying to break the cemetery monopoly.⁸ They therefore left no stone unturned to impede civil recognition.

The archdiocesan legal council, J. B. Z. Bolduc, actively lobbied with cabinet ministers. The provincial treasurer, the solicitor general, and the lieutenant-governor all pledged not to sanction civil recognition until Taschereau approved the decree of erection. Ouimet, however, proved to be more difficult. "Sachant que mon homme est un timide je lui ai donné des raisons qui le feront réfléchir avant d'agir."⁹ The government, Bolduc affirmed, would be showing gross disrespect for ecclesiastical authority by recognizing Notre Dame de Grâce. At the next elections, the opposition would surely capitalize on this. What support, what recognition, could Ouimet then expect from Bourget's clique who, months earlier, openly mocked him after the registers bill was approved?

6 ASQ, Université 108 # 87 J. B. Z. Bolduc à B. Faquet, 18 oct. 1873.

7 ACAM, RLB 21 Bourget à Trudel, 19 oct. 1873.

8 APFR, Acta (déc. 1873) Taschereau à Barnabò, 31 oct. 1873.

9 ASQ, Université 108 # 87 J. B. Z. Bolduc à B. Faquet, 18 oct. 1873.

The premier, however, wanted reassurance that he was following the right course: a directive from Rome, perhaps. The Archbishop therefore telegraphed Barnabò, asking whether civil recognition could be based on an unamended decree. The Prefect instructed Taschereau to suspend operations and await a formal decision from Rome.

In mid-November, relations between the sees of Montreal and Quebec plummeted to their nadir. Adolphe Chapleau anonymously and unilaterally published these telegrams to excuse the government's inaction to public opinion.¹⁰ Bourget reacted swiftly and passionately. He wrote Taschereau an open letter in the Nouveau Monde, accusing him of deliberately leaking the telegrams to the press. The Archbishop, he contended, also willfully misled the Propaganda by insinuating that the decree creating Notre Dame de Grâce was unamended. Moreover, he suggested that Barnabò acted on his own, not on the Congregation's, authority by replying to Taschereau.

Privately, Bourget believed that the Archbishop revealed an astounding lack of judgement. Taschereau should have communicated the Prefect's telegram to him and he would have quietly asked the parishioners of Notre Dame de Grâce to desist. Instead, all was done in the open. This created the deplorable impression that the Holy See officially prevented the government from discharging a legal obligation.¹¹

10 ASQ, Université 108 # 100 J.B.Z. Bolduc à B. Faquet, 21 nov. 1873.

11 ACAM, RLB 22 Bourget à Désautels, 21 nov. 1873.

Bourget refused to believe that Rome invested Taschereau with the authority to "... exercer sur le Ministère une gouverne, une pression si forte qu'ils ne puissent pas se rendre aux vœux de ces braves gens."¹²

Taschereau, in reply, contrasted his suffragan's professed fidelity to the Holy See with his actions. The bishop discredited Rome when he intimated that Barnabò overstepped his powers by ordering a halt to civil proceedings. He weakened ecclesiastical authority by allowing the Nouveau Monde to continue agitating for State recognition after Barnabò's telegram was published. He disregarded Taschereau's jurisdiction by invoking Désautels and Laflèche's interpretations. "Avec l'approbation de ces deux personnages V.G. croit pouvoir se passer de celle que le Saint Siège exige d'une manière absolue."¹³ Why was Bourget so anxious to obtain civil recognition? He obviously wanted to present Rome with another fait accompli. The Archbishop reminded his suffragan that, without the Propaganda's approval, the decree erecting Notre Dame de Grâce had no canonical value and could not serve as a basis for State recognition. The Congregation knew in March 1873 that the parish was involved in civil proceedings and yet, the Cardinals did not exempt it from provisions in the third pontifical decree. Bourget assumed the contrary, without the slightest valid reason.¹⁴

12 ACAM, RLB 22 Bourget à Taschereau, 28 nov. 1873.

13 APFR, SC 1872-74 Taschereau à Bourget, 21 nov. 1873.

14 ACAM, 355.123 Taschereau à Bourget, 20 déc. 1873.

Suspicion against the diocese of Montreal grew in the Archbishop's circle. Bolduc was certain that Bourget would stop at nothing to destroy St-Sulpice. The bishop would never respect Rome's wishes, interpreting them instead to suit his own sinister designs. If the Holy See did not fully support the Archbishop in this conflict, 'la sainte clique' would unleash a terrible persecution against all those who did not share their ideas. Bolduc feared that Taschereau was not wary enough and might well fall victim to their machinations. "Le mieux serait de le (Bourget) déplanter et de donner l'administration au Coadjuteur conjointement à l'Archevêque, de manière que l'un ne pourrait rien faire sans l'autre."¹⁵

Meanwhile, pressure mounted on the government to recognize Notre Dame de Grâce. Trudel and Bellerose threatened to join the opposition. Ouimet promised them action before Christmas.¹⁶ In the same breath, the premier assured Taschereau that he would await word from Rome.¹⁷ Finally, on January 2, 1874, after the Propaganda approved the 1871 decree creating Notre Dame de Grâce, the Lieutenant-Governor issued the long-awaited proclamation.

As this second power struggle unfolded, the polemic over Church-State relations continued unabated. Bourget and Taschereau again collided over the programme catholique. A new issue, though, emerged in June 1873 to divide them.

15 ASQ, Université 108 # 100 J.B.Z. Bolduc à B. Pâquet, 21 nov. 1873. # 104 J.B.Z. Bolduc à B. Pâquet, 15 déc. 1873.

16 ACAM, 355.123 Trudel à Bourget, 13 déc. 1873.

17 ASQ, Université 108 # 108 J.B.Z. Bolduc à B. Pâquet, 5 déc. 1873.

The bishop of Montreal directed his clergy to cancel their subscriptions to La Minerve, which had just published L. A. Dessaulles' "La Grande Guerre Ecclésiastique". Bourget concluded that further proof of the newspaper's Catholic liberalism was no longer needed.¹⁸ La Minerve antagonized the bishop even more by publishing his confidential instruction. The prelate sent off a second letter to his clergy.

In it, he emphasized the false doctrines which the Conservative organ propagated. He noted that prior to dismemberment, it was the only newspaper which respectable families read. Yet, La Minerve strayed from orthodoxy and sowed dissension among the clergy and all true conservatives. Its editors not only spoke out against dismemberment at every public inquiry, but transformed their paper into the chief vehicle of opposition. They proclaimed Bourget's operations illegal, justified the withholding of civil registers and quo warranto proceedings, and even maintained that the Pope had only given conditional approval to dismemberment. La Minerve abandoned the cause of New Brunswick Schools at the most crucial moment and sought to elude the bishop's authority by hiding behind the Metropolitan's mantle. It waged a disloyal campaign against the programme catholique and, in doing so, poorly served conservative interests. "En usant de son influence pour éloigner les programmistes, il s'était donc sans doute privé du secours des bons amis

18 APFR, SC 1872-74 Circulaire de Mgr. Bourget au clergé du diocèse de Montréal, 13 juin 1873.

qui, par devoir et par principe de religion, s'offraient d'eux même à lui venir en aide."¹⁹ Bourget did not intend to condemn the newspaper, at least not immediately, but merely to enlighten the clergy about its intrigues.²⁰ Laflèche fully endorsed his initiative.²¹

La Minerve's editors sought shelter from their bishop's ire.

(Nous avons eu) le malheur d'encourir le désaveu de notre Ordinaire pour la profession de doctrines que nous croyons de bonne foi soutenues et enseignées par la majorité de l'épiscopat Canadien ...²²

Fearing that Bourget would push the Holy See to approve his first circular, they turned to Taschereau. La Minerve, they complained, found itself in an untenable position since Bourget asserted that any attack against the Nouveau Monde was directed at him personally. The diocesan organ provoked them by labelling Cartier a persecutor of the Church and their newspaper, an instrument of gallicanism and liberalism. The editors deplored Bourget's doctrinal excesses, especially in education and parish law. The bishop even pretended that the Syllabus should be fully implemented in French Canada! They requested that Taschereau forward their appeal to Rome. The Archbishop acquiesced.

19 ASTR, Circulaire concernant la Minerve, 23 juin 1873.

20 Ibid., Bourget à Laflèche, 6 août 1873.

21 ACAM, 295.104 Laflèche à Bourget, 8 août 1873.

22 APFR, SC 1872-74 Duvernay Frères et Dansereau à Taschereau, 14 juil. 1873.

In Rome, meanwhile, Désautels insisted that the Propaganda use effective means to end Sulpician obstructionism. The Seminary, he argued, not only stalled civil recognition proceedings, which had come to cost parishioners thousands of dollars, but refused to transfer parish property to the bishop, as the second decree required.

Accordingly, the envoy outlined his short-term demands. He wanted the Propaganda to prevent the Sulpicians from making further civil appeals and enjoin them again to relinquish all parish property outside Notre Dame. In addition, the Cardinals had to relieve the Archbishop of his special mandate and instruct him to follow common law when receiving appeals against his suffragans. Telegraphic communication on important matters had to stop because it only aggravated tensions and fostered misunderstanding. Finally, the agent asked that if Bourget were required to amend the 1871 decrees exactly as the others, Rome should wait for the Lieutenant-Governor's proclamation and thus remove additional pretexts for obstruction.²³

The pastor of Varennes then made demands which went beyond the pontifical decrees. Challenging the existence of the debt, he called for a thorough investigation of Fabrique accounts since 1843 in the hope of breaking the cemetery monopoly. In addition, he insisted that the Sulpicians help either to support canonical pastors or

²³ ACAM, 901.136 Mémoire Désautels à Barnabò, 28 oct. 1873.
 901.142 Désautels à Simeoni, 24 nov. 1873.
ADSJQ, Désautels à Paré, 2 oct. 1873.

build churches in poorer parishes.²⁴

The Seminary's attorney, Larue, reaffirmed Sulpician property rights. With a logic more jesuitical than Sulpician, the lawyer interpreted the cession clause in the second decree to mean: "... le St-Siège nous exhorte à nous démettre de ces propriétés, et il exprime en même temps le désir de voir son exhortation suivi de son effet, mais il y a très loin de là un ordre proprement dit." There were two methods, he maintained, to cede property: with compensation or without. Unless Rome issued a formal and explicit order to the contrary, St-Sulpice would claim indemnification. Otherwise, the community would be exposed to the derision of its opponents. "Ce serait encore offrir aux regards de la société en Canada, une image trop frappante de ces hideuses spoliations de communautés ecclésiastiques, qui font aujourd'hui gémir l'Eglise, en quantité de contrées différentes."

The Sulpician envoy questioned whether, as Bourget maintained, the cession clause should be construed as a pressing order from Rome. To which institution, he asked, should the Seminary transfer parish property? The Fabrique possessed no legal right to ownership. Church councils did not yet exist in the canonical parishes. The Seminary therefore felt fully justified to await a more

²⁴ ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 9 sept. 1873.
ACAM, 901.136 Mémoire Désautels à Barnabò, 8 nov. 1873.

stable situation in Montreal before acting on this clause. In the meantime, Larue required that Sulpician rights to property and to the cemetery be fully respected.²⁵

Taschereau endorsed this position. The Seminary, he maintained, would implement the cession clause, once Bourget complied with the second pontifical decree. Since the bishop failed to establish annexes, St-Sulpice could not cede parish property to a legally recognized body. Besides, the entire question was now before the Roman tribunal. Bourget could hardly expect the Sulpicians to transfer property to parishes whose very existence was so tenuous.²⁶

The Propaganda reached a tentative decision in mid-December 1873, but permitted Désautels and Larue to comment upon provisions concerning parish administration before the decree was finalized. Once again, the Cardinals tried to strike a balance between the antagonists. Bourget obtained a full examination of Notre Dame's finances. The Seminary was assured that no fabriques would be established for Sulpician churches. Agents of the Church Council would administer this property, as Taschereau had stipulated.

Rome also defined the Sulpicians' contribution to Montreal. The Seminary would cede the churches and presbyteries in the bishop's territory for as long as these

25 ASSM, Mémoire Larue, 20 nov. 1873.

26 ACAM, 901.136 Taschereau à Bourget, 23 déc. 1873.

facilities served parish functions. Beyond that point, the Congregation did not venture. It refused to impose any additional obligations on the Sulpicians and asked Bourget not to press the point any more.²⁷

The Cardinals conceded all of Désautels' short-term demands. The three episcopal ordonnances were declared to be sufficiently amended for civil recognition. They promised never again to use telegrams to settle important questions. Taschereau was relieved of his mission as papal legate. Finally, the Propaganda warned that those having further recourse to civil authority against dismemberment would be excommunicated.²⁸

Spurred on by these decisions, Désautels fought to abolish the last vestiges of special status. He argued that the law did not recognize agents of the Fabrique as authorized to administer Sulpician parish property. Moreover, neither the Church Council nor the Seminary could manage these holdings directly. Only the bishop or individual parish fabriques could do so. Désautels feared that a government, hostile to ecclesiastical interests and composed of liberals and protestants, would seize on these illegal titles to appropriate the holdings. The only solution was to create church councils in every Montreal parish.²⁹

27 APFR, Acta (déc. 1873), décision de la Propagande sur le démembrement, 9 et 13 déc. 1873, f. 270.

28 ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 1 janv. 1874.

29 APFR, Acta (juin 1874) Mémoire Désautels à Barnabò, 12 janv. 1874.

Désautels' opinions caused a stir among Bourget's lawyers. They certainly agreed with him that neither the Fabrique nor its agents could manage property outside Notre Dame. But the idea that the government could seize ecclesiastical property held without the usual legal title very nearly scandalized them.³⁰ They themselves were divided, however, as to whether the Seminary could manage these holdings directly.

Désautels stood firm. He consulted with de Angelis who assured him that canon law did not permit a private body to administer parish property. Bourget's envoy therefore asserted, "... si c'est une erreur canonique, ce doit être aussi, ce me semble, une erreur civile."³¹

At the same time, Bourget's agent pursued his war on liberalism. In the fall of 1873, he submitted to the Propaganda statements drawn from the Quebec press illustrating the false doctrines which they professed.³² Later on, he presented a brief which was aimed at the Archbishop as much as at its purported target, the Code des Curés. Désautels exploited Taschereau's public assertion that Rome had found nothing reprehensible in the treatise. He alleged that since the Metropolitan and the bishop of St-Hyacinthe condoned the work, the Index had to condemn it.

(Le but du Code) a été de servir le parti libéral, qui, en Canada, fait des efforts inouis pour en finir avec les entraves qui

30 ACAM, 752.706 Opinion Trudel, 3 fév. 1874.

31 ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 12 mars 1874.

32 APFR, SC 1872-74, f. 703.

lui seraient apportées ... par l'indépendance que prétend avoir l'Autorité ecclésiastique ... Il est pénible d'avoir à déclarer que c'est Mgr. l'Archevêque qui, aidé de quelques prêtres qui l'entourent, semble être adjourd'hui le chef, qui soutient, avise et dirige ce parti libéral.³³

Despite his efforts, Désautels reported little success on this front. He urged Bourget and sympathetic colleagues to press the Index for a formal condemnation.³⁴

Larue also challenged the Propaganda's tentative settlement. He invoked the debt, either directly or indirectly, to shore up his arguments. According to the draft decree, St-Patrick, which belonged to the Church Council, would have its own fabrique. Larue rejected this provision as grossly unfair. Rome was proposing to leave the Fabrique with the heavy financial charges inherited from building the Irish church, while transferring the parish's revenues to a new corporation. Larue admitted that Taschereau and the Sulpicians themselves had proposed the cemetery monopoly to liquidate the debt, but in doing so, they never intended to strip the Fabrique of its prime property and income. Besides being unjust, this provision was illegal. St-Patrick did not belong to the Irish. Any man could appeal to the courts against this dispossession and win his case. Protestant judges would never deprive a legally constituted corporation of its property rights. The Sulpician attorney demanded that

³³ ACAM, 752.705 Mémoire Désautels sur le Code des Curés, circa nov. 1873.

³⁴ ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 5 fév. 1874.

either the Fabrique retain St-Patrick or that the Irish assume the \$140,000 debt for its construction.³⁵

The Seminary left no doubt about its own preference. Larue cited Senator Thomas Ryan who affirmed that the Irish were quite happy to enjoy the uninhibited use of St-Patrick leaving the Fabrique with its ownership and administration. They were afraid of the heavy debt which went with owning the church.³⁶

Larue also insisted that St-Sulpice not be forced to turn over any parish property to Bourget "... parce que cet ordre ne servirait qu'à exciter la convoitise de nos adversaires et à les engager à poursuivre notre ruine complète."³⁷ In supporting the agent's demand, Notre Dame's trustees warned of the dangers involved in such a transfer. The English Montreal press often criticized the bishop for being the third largest landowner in the city. The Protestants would surely resist the Seminary's attempt to cede more property to him. Besides the episcopal corporation could not even administer parish property, because the State restricted this right to church councils alone. Taschereau's expedient of naming Fabrique agents to manage the holdings remained the best under the circumstances.³⁸

A broad spectrum of opinion endorsed this position.

35 APFR, Acta (mai 1874) Mémoire Larue à Barnabò, 2 janv. 1874.

36 Ibid., Acta (mai 1874) Mémoire T. Ryan, circa mars 1874.

37 Ibid., Acta (mai 1874) Second mémoire Larue, 22 avr. 1874.

38 ASSM, Réponse de la Fabrique de Montréal au Mémoire Désautels, 5 mars 1874.

Sensitive to political changes in Ottawa, the Seminary sought out four Liberal lawyers, L. A. Jetté, V. P. W. Dorion, Rodolphe Laflamme, and H. V. Rainville to corroborate its legal opinions.³⁹ Taschereau again affirmed, on the Sulpicians' behalf, that establishing church councils prior to civil recognition was very dangerous.⁴⁰ The Quebec premier, supported by his Attorney and Solicitor-General, dismissed Désautels' fears of government expropriation. "Il n'y aurait qu'un Gouvernement de Libéraux (de l'espèce que nous connaissons) qui pourrait peut-être entretenir de telles chimères, mais encore j'en doute."⁴¹ He insisted that the property rights of the Seminary and the Church Council were inalienable.

Larue ended with the Fabrique's plan for a settlement. The trustees offered the Propaganda two alternatives. The first, which they feared might create an ominous precedent, was that the legislature dismember Notre Dame provided a majority of Montrealers approved. The government would apportion the Fabrique's property and debts to the new parishes and provide Notre Dame's creditors strict guarantees about debt liquidation. At the same time, it would preserve the Church Council's monopoly over the cemetery, including all burial fees, until its own obligations were met.

39 APFR, Acta (mai 1874) Opinion Jetté, appuyé par Dorion, Laflamme et Rainville, 5 mars 1874.

40 Ibid., Acta (mai 1874) Taschereau à la Propagande, 5 mars 1874.

41 Ibid., Acta (mai 1874) G. Ouimet à la Propagande, 27 fév. 1874.

Alternately, the wardens suggested that Sulpician parishes remain annexes as long as the debt existed and that they then seek civil recognition, if they so desired.⁴²

In Rome, an atmosphere of gloom hung over Bourget's opponents. The bishop of Montreal "est bien plus appuyé à Rome qu'on le croit à Québec", noted Benjamin Pâquet. "La position est grave, tendue et tout à fait périlleuse."⁴³ He contrasted the lethargy with which the bishops combatted Bourget to the vigor and determination which characterized the prelate's campaigns. Bourget was now on the threshold of victory. Only a vigorous coup could turn the tide. Pâquet proposed that the Archbishop and his loyal suffragans bypass the Propaganda and petition Cardinal Antonelli, the Secretary of State, who could work on the Pope to veto the Congregation's forthcoming sentence. Prospects must have seemed very bleak!

Nevertheless, the fourth decree on dismemberment, sanctioned July 4, 1874, differed little from its December draft. Minor amendments were evident. The Fabrique would administer directly, rather than through agents, parish property which the Sulpicians owned in their territory. When constituted, St-Patrick's church council would assume its share of Notre Dame's debt. The commission investigating the debt would also recommend means for liquidating it quickly.⁴⁴

42 ASSM, Réponse de la Fabrique, 5 mars 1874.

43 ASQ, Université 36 # 78 B. Pâquet à Bolduc, 1 fév. 1874.

44 ACAM, RCD 44 Quatrième decret pontifical sur le démembrement, 4 juil. 1874.

Despite the sentence, St-Sulpice continued to regard dismemberment as illegal. Jetté and associates reiterated the Sulpician stand and François Langelier, Bourget's bête noire, seconded one of these legal opinions.⁴⁵ This permitted the Seminary to delay implementing two key articles of the fourth decree: the first, on ceding parish property in the bishop's territory; the second, on instituting a church council for St-Patrick. Jetté and his colleagues warned that St-Sulpice would be conferring legitimacy upon canonical parishes by turning churches and presbyteries over to them. These manoeuvres frustrated Bourget. He could not organize church councils unless they possessed property; St-Sulpice refused to relinquish its establishments until fabriques were created.⁴⁶ Moreover, the Sulpicians carried their opposition to the local level and again got parishioners involved in their squabbles with Bourget, notably in Ste-Brigide. The bishop again reluctantly offered the Propaganda his resignation.⁴⁷

He warned Alessandro Franchi, the new Prefect that, by choosing to hear these incessant appeals concerning purely local issues, he was hamstringing episcopal administration. A bishop could not function unless he had the unreserved right to resolve these problems as he saw fit.⁴⁸ Nor

45 ASSM, Opinion Jetté, Rainville et Laflamme, 17 nov. 1874. Opinion Jetté contresigné de Rainville, Laflamme, Langelier et J. Langlois, 25 nov. 1874.

46 ACAM, RCD 45 Bourget à T. Harel, 2 oct. 1874.

47 APFR, SC 1875 Bourget à Pie IX, 2 oct. 1874.

48 Ibid., SC 1875 Bourget à Franchi, 25 juin 1875. Bourget à Franchi, 18 déc. 1874.

could he afford to support, like St-Sulpice, a permanent representative to the Holy See.⁴⁹ Bourget also remarked that the Congregation was discrediting its own authority by frequently revising its decisions. Despite these observations, the Propaganda continued to receive Sulpician pleas without making a definitive judgement. Undoubtedly, Désautels' departure from Rome shortly after the fourth pontifical decree, did not help the bishop's cause. A young Montreal theology student, Téléspore Harel, replaced him; but he lacked Désautels' astuteness and his experience in dealing with convoluted Roman diplomacy.

Nevertheless, two events in 1875 compensated for these setbacks. In February, the legislature unanimously adopted a bill recognizing the remaining non-Sulpician parishes.⁵⁰ Désautels was delighted with the legislation. One provision, he maintained, subordinated State recognition to the pontifical and episcopal decrees and confirmed the Church's right to self-government. Another acknowledged the boundaries of Notre Dame as delimited in Bourget's ordonnance of 1873. Désautels concluded that the bill gave the lie to Taschereau's contention that the State would not grant recognition until all civil prescriptions were fulfilled.⁵¹ Additional legislation in December 1875 stipulated that the government would automatically sanction any future canonical

49 ACAM, RCD 45 Bourget à T. Harel, 11 déc. 1874.

50 Quebec, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 38 Vict. Chap. 29.

51 ACAM, 901.141 Désautels à Harel, 26 mai 1875.

erection within the old territory of Notre Dame.⁵²

The report on the Fabrique debt, completed in July 1875, also encouraged Bourget. Four commissioners carried out the eight-month investigation. The bishop's appointees, Isidore Gravel, pastor at Laprairie, and Canon Joseph Séguin, were long-time active supporters of episcopal policy. The Fabrique chose two bankers: F. Vézina of Quebec City and H. Cotté of Montreal.

The report was a measured, but explicit condemnation of parish administration. It confirmed most of the observations made by Bourget or his lawyers. Without questioning the good faith of either St-Sulpice or the Fabrique, the commissioners exposed highly irregular, if not illegal practices. They attributed the size of the debt, set at \$300,000, to three distinct factors. First, the cost of Notre Dame and St. Patrick far exceeded Fabrique revenues.

Second, the vagaries of parish administration contributed to the steady increase of the debt. Lack of coordination between various sectors of this administration was particularly evident. The Church Council's finance committee, for example, operated in an almost complete vacuum, borrowing and spending monies without the prior consent of all the wardens. The Sulpician solicitor alone managed Notre Dame's passive debt which prevented the Fabrique from being aware of its

⁵² Quebec, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 39 Vict. Chap. 36.

rapid progression. Verification worked very imperfectly, since parish accounts had not been checked for three consecutive years. Moreover, the church trustees ran Notre Dame's affairs without the slightest reference to the bishop whom the State especially designated to supervise and restrain spending. This very serious omission meant that, in a strict sense, the wardens were binding themselves alone, not the parish, when they asked for loans. Without concrete evidence, they believed that St-Sulpice would extricate them from these financial straits.

Third, the Seminary failed to implement the 1854 convention. Baile had admitted to Taschereau that the agreement bound his community to extinguish the interest-bearing portion of the debt.

The investigators recommended abolishing limited special status. Each parish would have its own church council. St-Patrick would assume its share of the debt, in return for sole rights over parish property. This would allow Notre Dame's wardens to run their own affairs exclusively and thereby reduce administrative costs. The report also proposed measures to rationalize the Fabrique's management. In order to avoid any possible conflict of interest, the trustees should jointly administer the passive debt, while the Sulpician solicitor would stop participating in Church Council business altogether. Extraordinary expenditures would all have to receive episcopal authorization. The Fabrique could not use regular parish revenues to finance such projects, as was done in the past.

Finally, the commissioners urged the Seminary to discharge its obligations under the 1854 compact as soon as possible. They also suggested that an appeal be made to St-Sulpice, the Fabrique and Notre Dame's parishioners for a concerted effort to liquidate the debt.⁵³

Bourget drew the harsh, logical consequences of this report. He emphasized that the debt was

... radicalement illégale, puisque d'après la loi et les règlements en force dans cette province, tout emploi de deniers d'une Fabrique pour d'autres fins que celle du culte et pour celles qui sont prévues par le droit, et tout emprunt fait sans l'autorisation de l'Evêque, sont irréguliers, illégaux et ne lient que ceux qui les ont faits.

The bishop considered that the opposition could no longer justifiably use the debt to impede regular parish administration. He accused the Fabrique and Seminary of collusion. The former never protested against St-Sulpice's disregard of the 1854 convention. Church wardens allowed the Sulpician solicitor to monopolize their affairs and to accumulate debts on interest payments for so many years. Behind this collusion, however, lay the Seminary's perennial opposition to episcopal authority.

Bourget, therefore, made his own recommendations. The Sulpicians, he insisted, should bear the full debt in order to make amends for the irregular administration which they inspired and directed. Furthermore, the cemetery monopoly should be cancelled. This privilege in effect

⁵³ ACAM, 901.143 Rapport des députés sur la dette de la Fabrique, 13 juil. 1875.

penalized Montrealers, already burdened by heavy responsibilities, for the Fabrique's own extravagant expenditures. Bourget again noted "... que c'est sur la classe la plus pauvre, que pèse tout particulièrement ce d^ur imp^ot de cimeti^ère." Since the commissioners largely attributed the debt to the building of St-Patrick's church, Bourget considered that the wardens could, in fairness, request reimbursement of these costs, but nothing more. Apart from these major amendments, the bishop endorsed the recommendations of the report. He concluded that the Propaganda should refuse all further Sulpician appeals and order the Seminary to accept episcopal authority or relinquish parish work. "Il est certainement plus avantageux que le S^éminaire abandonn^ât ces paroisses que d'^être continuellement en opposition et en contestation avec son Ev^êque."⁵⁴

The Seminary took almost two years to reply to the report. Rousselot and A. J. Captier, French Sulpician agent in Rome, argued in March 1877 that the inquiry had been a pretext for Bourget to challenge the 1874 decree. While the Fabrique, they noted, chose professionals for the task, the bishop delegated two priests long involved in disputes with the Seminary. Gravel and S^éguin exceeded the inquiry's terms of reference and allowed themselves to criticize Fabrique administration from 1843 onwards.

54 ACAM, 901.143 Observations de l'Ev^êque de Montr^éal sur le rapport des d^éput^és, 30 sept. 1875.

Since the expanded investigation interfered with the banking duties of the Fabrique's representatives, they assumed a very minor role. When Bourget's delegates completed the task, they met with Vézina and Cotté and guaranteed the authenticity of the report. They even asserted that the Fabrique and the Seminary approved their findings.

As for liquidating the debt, Rousselot and Captier agreed that St-Patrick should share the burden, but insisted that the Irish would be violently opposed. The problem, therefore, would still remain. The bishop could pay the \$20,000 court costs for the Guibord trial which had involved the Fabrique against its will. However, the Sulpician envoys emphasized that special status remained the most effective expedient.⁵⁵

While Rousselot and Captier were submitting their case, F. Vézina prepared an affidavit contradicting their allegations about the investigation. The commissioners, he observed, all sifted through an abundance of material. Vézina remarked in passing that sections of Fabrique records were in a deplorable state. The delegates consulted each other and deliberated at length. All approved the final draft. "Je dis donc que je n'ai rien signé de ce Rapport sur la parole des autres députés: je me suis assuré de la véracité des faits énoncés dans ce Rapport...."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ APER, SC 1877 Mémoire Rousselot et Captier sur la dette, 19 mars 1877.

⁵⁶ ASSM, Déclaration F. Vézina, 20 mars 1877.

The bishop of Montreal expected prompt action from Rome on the debt and on his local problems with St-Sulpice. The Congregation, however, was much more preoccupied with the deteriorating atmosphere in the Quebec Church. Dis-memberment largely had resolved itself. Consequently, Rome was in no hurry to close the case. The bishop was becoming increasingly unhappy with the Propaganda's policies. He therefore proposed to step down. "Elle (Franchi) peut obtenir du St-Père, par l'acceptation de sa (Bourget) démission, qu'il soit jeté à la mer, afin qu'il se fasse un calme parfait...."⁵⁷

Peace, though, did not descend on the diocese of Montreal with Bourget's resignation. Personalities changed, the issues remained the same. The third bishop of the metropolis, Fabre, pursued his predecessor's policies. He insisted that the debt be settled quickly in order to regularize parish administration. He also wanted the Propaganda to support him actively in his local confrontations with the Seminary.⁵⁸

St-Sulpice refused to give in. "Dans le conflit présent, comme dans ceux qui ont précédé, nos biens temporels se trouvent très grandement compromis."⁵⁹ Baile reiterated that the law recognized the Seminary's exclusive ownership rights. He did not believe that Rome would

57 ACAM, RCD 46 Bourget à Franchi, 28 avr. 1876.

58 Ibid., RCD 45 Fabre à Harel, 1 oct. 1876.

59 ASSM, Baile à Rousselot, 10 fév. 1877.

compel the Seminary to compromise.

Télesphore Harel, Fabre's agent at the Holy See and former student at the Grand Séminaire, warned that the bishop would have to break the foreign mentality dominating St-Sulpice before peace would come to Montreal. The French, he noted, had monopolized, from the very beginning, the Order's governing council, which was self-recruiting and which appointed the Superior. Only one French Canadian sat on the board. Imbued with xenophobia, the Sulpicians would never accept the authority of a foreign bishop.⁶⁰

Thus, mutual suspicion continued into Fabre's tenure. No compromises seemed possible. Meanwhile, the Propaganda deferred these issues to the papal legate who could evaluate them at closer range.

* * *

The Fabrique's brief of March 1874 indicated that, four years after the Sulpicians first defined their position, their objectives remained the same. To achieve them, they exploited, as Giband observed, every possible ambiguity of civil and canon law. In Rome, the Sulpicians stressed that dismemberment was illegal even after the State recognized the first canonical parish. In Quebec City, they argued that Bourget's operations contravened the

60 ACAM, RCD 46 Harel à Fabre, 1 fév. 1877.

Holy See's prescriptions. Yet, the keystone of their case was the debt which prevented them from ceding parish property and establishing church councils.

Once again, Sulpician logic was hermetic: the debt justified special status which perpetuated the debt. The Seminary's case was not without contradictions, however. Before Taschereau the Sulpicians recognized their commitments arising from the 1854 Report. Yet, with Bourget they maintained that the agreement was not legally binding. On one hand, lawyers contended that the State could force all parishioners to share the Church Council's burdens; on the other, Rousselot affirmed that the Irish of St-Patrick would never agree to assume their part of the debt. Instead of decreasing, the Fabrique's obligations were rising at a breathtaking pace.

The Sulpicians seemed to consider the debt to be a private matter between themselves and the Fabrique. Outside interference was unwelcome. But, quite apart from legislation which recognized the public character of parish debts, St-Sulpice was imposing a financial burden on Montrealers in the name of this debt. Either it was a private affair or it was not. In the first instance, the Seminary had no right to tax parishioners and impede a more orderly parish administration. In the second, they had a strict obligation to tell Montrealers how these commitments would be met.

The 1874 investigation, operating on the latter

assumption graphically illustrated the conflicts of interest, the outright abuses, resulting from the Seminary's close identification with the Fabrique. It revealed the gross temporal deficiencies of the old order, just as Bourget's earlier showed its spiritual inadequacies. The commissioners proposed diversifying responsibilities, both administrative and financial. Bourget, however, adhered to the first premise and, as a result, demanded an outright end to special status. The Seminary rejected both options.

Taschereau encouraged Sulpician refractoriness. Since 1871, he displayed an obvious bias for Bourget's antagonists. Temperamentally, the Archbishop and St-Sulpice were well-matched since they shared identical views on the élitist nature of Church-State relations. This compatibility was strengthened by the excesses of Montreal's diocesan press and enragé pamphlet literature.

The papal legate continued to judge Bourget and St-Sulpice by different yardsticks. While he condemned the bishop's failure to amend the three decrees of erection, he excused the Seminary's refusal to cede parish property. The Metropolitan therefore made Sulpician compliance with Roman sentences conditional upon Bourget's actions. Yet, the Propaganda placed an equal burden on both parties for implementing its will.

Taschereau's predilections gave rise to contradictions in his own position. Following the second pontifical decree, he told Bourget that amending the episcopal ordonnances for those parishes seeking civil recognition

was unnecessary. The following year, the Archbishop stubbornly insisted on these revisions as a prerequisite to State sanction. The nature of the 1873 amendments were admittedly different from those of 1872. But, as Bourget observed, they concerned ecclesiastical discipline only and were therefore outside the civil sphere. Similarly, Taschereau stressed to Bourget that Fabrique agents alone were legally authorized to administer parish property and that the Seminary could not transfer its holdings until these were appointed. Yet, the Archbishop's report mentioned Fabrique agents or de facto church councils as legitimate administrators of parish property.

Obviously, his later positions were intended to support Sulpician special status. However, he did not see that the Seminary had a different understanding of what this privileged position meant. His interventions in Rome and Quebec City reflected more a deep-seated distrust of his suffragan than a desire to implement Rome's decisions. His persistent patronage of appeals against Bourget's acts effectively paralyzed Montreal's episcopal administration.

Bourget's demands, although sometimes exceeding Rome's prescriptions, never betrayed them. He wanted all Montreal parishes to enjoy a regular status. This meant civil recognition, individual church councils, and cemeteries. The third Roman sentence confirmed State recognition. Monaco, in his explanations to Désautels, allowed the

bishop to set up fabriques immediately in his territory and eventually in Sulpician parishes. So far, Bourget's position does not contradict the Propaganda's wishes. On the last demand, the prelate did not propose revoking the cemetery monopoly directly, but rather required an investigation of the debt. Only after the 1874 report, did he allow himself to request individual cemeteries for all parishes.

General indications are that Bourget scrupulously complied with Rome's orders. When Taschereau challenged his revised decrees, the bishop did not initiate further civil procedures until the Propaganda judged the issue. He did permit three parishes to continue their quest for State recognition but only after Laflèche and Désautels assured him that the Congregation allowed him to do so. Bourget also obeyed Rome's request not to press for additional Sulpician contributions to the parishes. This demand no longer appeared in his briefs after December 1873. Following the fourth decree, he refrained from demanding civil recognition for Sulpician parishes. Finally, Rome's determination to judge local conflicts surely frustrated the old prelate, but he submitted, albeit reluctantly.

At first glance, Bourget's position on the debt might appear harsh and inflexible. The bishop, however, was merely drawing the logical consequences of the 1874 investigation. The commissioners made two recommendations

which would have virtually eliminated the Fabrique's debt at one stroke: fulfillment of the 1854 compact and repatriation of St-Patrick's debt. The requirements of the second decree having thus been met, the cemetery monopoly would no longer be necessary.

While the bishop's demands were legitimate and reasonable, the arguments which Désautels used to support them betrayed a rigid legalism, more characteristic of his opponents. The pastor of Varennes' arguments about government expropriation was certainly typical of the times. The Sulpicians, Fabre, Taschereau, and Bourget variously resorted to it. However, this argument served very poorly long-term ecclesiastical interests which Désautels purported to defend. Similarly, accusations of liberalism flung at the Archbishop revealed an exaggerated and tyrannical mind. Bourget's weakness was to tolerate such unmeasured tactics. He readily forgave excesses committed for a just cause.

Rome seemed to adopt an excellent expedient in July 1874. By recognizing that parish property, though privately owned, should be publicly administered, the Propaganda confirmed a principle for which Bourget had fought strenuously. By specifying that these holdings, when no longer serving parish functions, should revert to Sulpicians, it upheld the Seminary's jealously guarded right. The decree permitted all parishes to secure civil recognition, except for St-Joseph and St-Ann which the Fabrique would manage until these parishes acquired their own property. This was

therefore a temporary measure. The Propaganda designed the articles regarding the cemetery monopoly and the debt investigation to appeal to both parties. Thus, in its permanent and transitory features, the decree was a good compromise.

For a time, Rome succeeded in transcending the demands of both parties. The old parish of Montreal now had an administration closely consonant with canon law. Yet, a vague intimation of special status remained, but belonged to the Fabrique, not to the Seminary. This equilibrium did not endure. Conflicts over administering St-Patrick, property rights in Ste-Brigide, and the debt inquiry demanded unambiguous policies. Unfortunately, the Cardinals refused to take a stand and therefore tipped the scales in the Seminary's favor.

Three factors explain this shift. First, the Propaganda underwent a change of personnel in 1874. Barnabò and Capalti, prelates considered favorable to Bourget, died. The Minutante, Z. Zitelli, Benjamin Pâquet's close friend, assumed a more active role in Propaganda affairs, while de Angelis' influence waned. Second, Bourget recalled Désautels from Rome, losing an artful, energetic, and experienced apologist. Téléphore Harel was simply not equipped to replace him, nor to match wits with Pâquet who defended St-Sulpice almost as vigorously as Laval. Finally, Rome became increasingly preoccupied with the Quebec Church's political involvement, to the exclusion of every other issue.

CHAPTER IX
LAVAL TRIUMPHS

Following the 1874 decision to suspend judgement, the Propaganda took fully two years to elaborate a university policy. In the interval the Cardinals studied various proposals to conciliate the sees of Montreal and Quebec City. They again consulted the Quebec hierarchy and more particularly the parties concerned. Nevertheless, they encountered Laval's stiff opposition to any compromise. The pontifical decree of February 13, 1876 capitulated to Laval's demand for a university monopoly. Bourget lost out on every point in contention. The judgement was telling evidence of Rome's utter failure to effect an entente and bring peace to a badly divided Quebec Church.

It left Montreal diocesan circles deeply alienated. The Cardinal Prefect's letter, which announced the Propaganda's decision, seemed designed as well to reproach the bishop for his obstinacy. Bourget maintained that it was impossible to implement the decree and again tendered his resignation. The Cathedral Chapter fully endorsed his viewpoint. Charles-Edouard Fabre considered that Montreal lacked the financial resources to set up an annex of Laval. He also complained of the little power which the episcopacy would exercise over the restructured university.

Frustration with the pontifical decree did not come exclusively from the diocese of Montreal. With growing insistence, Quebec bishops had been demanding effective power in hiring Laval's staff. Some were strong and open supporters of the official Conservative Party, and regarded university professors actively engaged in Liberal politics with great dismay. Rome, however, paid no heed to their claims. Bourget's disciples seized upon this discontent. By playing on the hierarchy's partisan sentiments, they secured powerful allies to obtain full episcopal control over university personnel and reverse Rome's decision to establish an annex of Laval in Montreal. In this last goal, though, the Quebec bishops were unsuspecting accomplices.

This strategy was very dangerous. It confirmed the Propaganda's suspicions that Bourget, who in fact had resisted being identified too closely with politicians, was motivated by purely partisan considerations. Since the bishop's political involvement, if measured by the programme catholique, antedated that of his colleagues, the Congregation would surely hold him responsible for the fever gripping the Quebec Church. As with dismemberment, Rome submitted the university question to the papal legate. Little indicated, however, that the policy of total support for Laval would change.

* * *

Bourget would not let the university question die in the

late winter of 1874. He wrote to the Pope emphasizing the need for a speedy decision. Pius IX resubmitted the issue to the Propaganda, where opinion more than ever favored creating two distinct universities.¹ The prolonged absence from Rome of Cardinal Sacconi, a long-standing anti-Bourgettiste, and the appointment of a new Prefect contributed to the changed atmosphere. The Congregation was impelled by a desire for a fresh start, totally divorced from past polemics. In fact, Cardinal Franchi was quoted as saying:

Il n'est pas ici question d'examiner s'il y aura une Université à Montréal, mais le moyen d'établir cette Université, sans nuire, si c'est possible, à celle de Québec. Il est reconnu que Montréal a droit à une Université et devra l'avoir.²

This statement apparently came during a crucial conciliation meeting with Désautels and Benjamin Pâquet at which the prelate proposed a plan to break the university deadlock. He suggested establishing two truly provincial institutions, linked by a higher university council. Composed of the Quebec hierarchy, this body would standardize curriculum and discipline as well as appoint administrative and teaching staff. The Cardinal was reverting to the concept originally inspiring Laval, which gave the hierarchy a central position in the university. He was also trying to reconcile Laval's concerns about enrollment and the quality of

1 ASQ, Université 36 # 87B. Pâquet à Bolduc, 25 mai 1874.

2 ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 8 juil. 1874.

education with Montreal's needs. Of course, Franchi wanted the episcopacy's advice on the plan. Recent changes in some Quebec sees added to his hopes of ending the stalemate. Zéphirin Moreau had replaced Charles Larocque as bishop of St-Hyacinthe. Thomas Duhamel had succeeded Bruno Guigues in Ottawa. Antoine Racine was named to the new diocese of Sherbrooke.

Désautels immediately accepted the plan for Bourget. He considered it a strong indication that the Prefect was concerned about Laval's orthodoxy.³ To remove any pretext for the Séminaire de Québec's rejecting the blueprint, he proposed that the hierarchy indemnify the university for its founding costs.⁴ Three other bishops, Fabre, Laflèche, and Duhamel supported the Franchi blueprint, although all rejected Désautels' offer of compensation. In terms reminiscent of the Fabrique debt debate, Fabre argued that Laval administered its affairs without ever consulting the episcopacy. How could the bishops now be held collectively responsible for its enormous founding debt?⁵

For the Archdiocese of Quebec, Benjamin Pâquet rejected the proposal out of hand. He held that Quebec's small population could not support two universities. Langevin, Moreau, and Racine were also opposed. They felt that

3 ADSJQ, Désautels à Bourget, 8 juil. 1874.

4 APFR, Acta (février 1876), f. 16.

5 ACAM, RLB 23 Fabre à Franchi, 30 déc. 1874.

Franchi's project was almost impossible to implement, given its structural aspects. It entailed major upheavals in Laval's constitution. The British Parliament would have to sanction these changes, thus dangerously exposing Catholic rights to the whims of a crushing Protestant majority. The bishops were also expected to take over major administrative functions from the Séminaire de Québec. But, they had neither the time, nor the physical stamina to prevent a disastrous competition between the two projected institutions. Dire predictions were again made about the inevitable decline of academic standards and enrollment. Laval's faculties of law and medicine would certainly shut down.⁶

Besides, constant ideological confrontation would ensue. Waxing metaphorical, Hamel spoke of banner pitted against banner, altar against altar.

... Nous pouvons affirmer, d'après les journaux religieux de Montréal, (que l'Université de Montréal) sera essentiellement politique, faisant du Droit public et du Droit Canon, non avec l'autorité infallible de l'Eglise, mais avec une autorité privée et contestée et cependant ardente.⁷

Religion and the nation stood to suffer. Moreau, Racine, and Langevin recommended an annex of Laval in Montreal as the only sound solution to the university question.

Langevin and Pâquet both wanted Franchi to await Bourget's

6 APFR, Acta (février 1876), f. 16 et suiv. Mémoire B. Pâquet à Franchi, 13 janv. 1875.

7 Ibid., SOCG (février 1876) Mémoire J. Hamel aux évêques de la province, 3 oct. 1874.

death before resolving the issue.⁸

Even before the hierarchy took a stand on the Franchi plan, Pâquet sought to subvert it. Convinced more than ever about the Jesuit conspiracy, he urged that the Lieutenant-Governor or the Premier write to Cardinal Antonelli, showing him the connection between the Order and a Catholic university in Montreal. By so doing, the government, which wanted at all cost to avoid the highly controversial Jesuit Estates Question, would be acting in its own interests. It would also be serving Laval's cause, since the Cardinals were always most impressed with the opinion of government officials. "Si le gouvernement veut se débarrasser de ces ennemis, qu'il fasse ce que je conseille."⁹

Gédéon Ouimet complied. His letter to Antonelli simply reiterated Pâquet's own words. The Premier saw the Jesuits as sole instigators of the university dispute. They were foreigners, he argued, both in fact and in temperament, and therefore unpopular in Canada. Most spent long years in the United States where they deeply imbibed republican ideas. They entered Canada as confirmed annexationists. A university under their direction would inevitably bear this subversive stamp.¹⁰

Pâquet felt that if this tactic failed, the Séminaire de Québec should demand a sizeable indemnity from the Quebec bishops. The faculties of law and medicine should also close because they could not be competitive until their

8 APFR, SOCG (février 1876) Langevin à Franchi, 23 nov. 1874.

9 ASQ, Université 36 # 87, Pâquet à Bolduc, 25 mai 1874.

10 APFR, Acta (fév. 1876) partie de lettre de G. Ouimet à Antonelli, juin 1874.

combined enrollment exceeded five to six hundred students.¹¹

Pâquet's strategy proved particularly effective. Bourget had great difficulty ridding himself of this veritable Jesuit stigma. He assured the Congregation that he fully endorsed the Franchi plan by which the episcopacy, not a specific religious community, administered the university. Jesuits could not therefore exercise a monopoly of higher education in Montreal. Collège Sainte-Marie would seek affiliation exactly as other diocesan collèges. Bourget added that if the Jesuits had actively promoted the university cause, it was not out of some secret conspiracy, but to afford certain educational privileges to their students and to raise their academic standards.¹²

To dispel another major component of the conspiracy theory, Bourget's secretary, Paré, carefully dissociated the Jesuit Estates from the university questions. The solution to the first controversy lay with the provincial hierarchy, he emphasized. If the bishops reached an accord with the legislature, the Pope himself would apportion their estates. Agitating for a university would not advance Jesuit property claims in the least. The two questions were completely unrelated.¹³

11 ASQ, Université 35 #16, Pâquet à Bolduc, 13 sept. 1874.

12 ACAM, RCD 45 Bourget à Harel, 29 oct. 1875.

13 Ibid., 820.001 Paré à Harel, 5 nov. 1875.

Suspicion against the Jesuits lingered at the Propaganda, and was bolstered in the summer of 1875 when Cesare Roncetti, alleged author of the Franchi plan¹⁴ and the Cardinal Prefect's close friend, visited North America. Officially, he was to confer the Cardinal's hat to Bishop McCloskey of Philadelphia. Unofficially, he was to collect some immediate impressions of the university controversy, which was mired in stalemate.¹⁵ Bourget did not leave the Roman prelate unattended during his stay. Lamarche and Désautels travelled with him from Philadelphia to Montreal. The latter then escorted him to Halifax. Back in Rome, Roncetti received additional briefings from de Angelis.

Despite these efforts, the legate came to believe, while still in Quebec, that the university and Jesuit estates issues were intimately linked. He also became convinced of Jesuit aspirations to control the university. In fact, a rumor circulating at the Propaganda in late October to the effect that the Quebec parliament had received a new request for a Catholic university in Montreal, automatically triggered suspicion against the Jesuits.¹⁶

Bourget's Roman envoy, Téléphore Harel, sent home distress signals. He felt incapable of dispelling the

14 ASQ, Pâquet à Bolduc, 5 sept. 1874.

15 ACAM, 990.025 Harel à Bourget, 23 mai 1875.

16 Ibid., RCD 45 Harel à Bourget, 18 oct. 1875.

mistrust permeating Roman opinion. Only Désautels, he believed, could change the situation. "... C'est de tous ceux, qui ont eu des rapports avec (Roncetti) lors de sa visite à Montreal et à Québec, celui qui lui a plu davantage pour sa bienveillance et son talent pour les affaires."¹⁷ Roncetti was responsible for Désautels' recent title of Domestic Papal Prelate. Harel therefore beseeched Bourget to delegate the pastor of Varennes to Rome.

Meanwhile, the Propaganda prepared to resolve the university question for good. The Cardinals asked Mgr. Camillo Santori, their adviser on the Oriental Rite, to prepare an outside opinion. Santori first enunciated the fundamental premise of his consultation. He noted that the Séminaire de Québec and the hierarchy basically disagreed about the purpose for which Laval was established. The Séminaire sought to improve learning. The bishops, to prevent Catholic youth from attending Protestant institutions. Santori considered that this conflict should be resolved in the bishops' favor.

The Roman official then suggested two alternatives. The first would transform Laval alone into a provincial university, leaving the Séminaire de Québec to administer its property, but reserving course content and staff appointments for the hierarchy. This expedient would obviate amending Laval's charter, since the Archbishop could easily share his powers with the suffragans. Laval

17 ACAM, 990.025 Harel à Bourget, addendam, 8 oct. 1875.

would then affiliate Montreal's schools of medicine and law on the terms offered by Victoria University in the 1860's. The hierarchy could settle disparities in curriculum. As a provincial institution, Laval was expected to be conciliating with regard to affiliation. The Séminaire de Québec would have to admit that Montreal students simply would not go to Quebec City. Santori insisted that his plan differed essentially from Bourget's 1862 proposal because the bishop of Montreal had not come to terms with discrepancies in discipline and course content.

The consultor then recommended an alternative which borrowed substantially from the Franchi plan. He retained the higher university council with all its designated functions, but removed staff appointments from its jurisdiction. The bishops of Quebec City and Montreal would exercise this prerogative exclusively within their respective institutions. When resolving curricular conflicts, the episcopacy would ensure that they not deter students from attending Catholic establishments. To avoid amending Laval's charter, Santori gave both universities identical internal administrative structures. St-Sulpice or the Jesuits would have the same rights and obligations as the Séminaire de Québec. Finally, the prelate stipulated that Laval would enjoy precedence over the University of Montreal, thus resorting to the old Roman expedient of bestowing honorific titles on the losing side. In conclusion, Santori foresaw no major problem in the existence of two Catholic universities

in Quebec.¹⁸

In the final months of 1875, the agents did some eleventh-hour jockeying to win over the Propaganda to their theses. Since the diocese could not afford to delegate Désautels to Rome, Bourget gave Harel full powers of representation. The theology student especially cultivated Roncetti. He played the ideological trump, but much less aggressively than Désautels. He praised the Séminaire de Québec for its selfless devotion and emphasized Montreal's needs more than Laval's shortcomings. Harel in fact considered the long-term interests of both universities to be convergent.

"... Importa ad ambedue le città che sparisca il timore e i danni del liberalismo". But, Laval alone could not fulfill the expectations of Montreal youth, due as much to its limited resources, as its guiding spirit. Thus, Montreal's allegations against Laval remained, but they were conveyed more implicitly. Harel concluded rhetorically: "Bisogna aspettare che siamo ridotti a quell' estremità (il regno del liberalismo), perche nostra madre, la chiesa, ci conceda il diritto di proterggerci?"¹⁹

Benjamin Pâquet focused primarily on academic and disciplinary standards because he feared that the Propaganda

18 APFR, Acta (fév. 1876) Voto Camillo Santori, 26 oct. 1876.

19 ACAM, 820.001. Harel à Roncetti, 25 nov. 1875.
 "... It is important to both cities that the fears and evils of liberalism be extirpated." "Must we be reduced to those extremes (the triumph of liberalism), before holy mother Church gives us the right to protect ourselves?"

would try to undermine them. In 1866, he indicated, Laval lowered its requirements, as Barnabò had requested, to facilitate affiliating recalcitrant collèges. How much further could it go? High academic standards were relative. Compared with universities in Great Britain, France, and Belgium, Laval's were far from severe.²⁰

The long-awaited Roncetti report, which would direct the Congregation's deliberations, was finally submitted. Its author failed to perceive any ideological element to the university debate. Instead, he reduced everything to self-interest. In Montreal, he noted, the Jesuits expected the provincial government to restore their estates, soon after Rome granted the city a university. While in Quebec City, Taschereau wanted to appropriate these properties for the Quebec hierarchy. Thus, the Jesuits became proponents of a second Catholic university and the Archbishop, its irreducible opponent.

This particular disagreement, however, was stimulated by an older and deeper problem: the rivalry between Montreal and Quebec City. Unfortunately, hostility characterized relations between the clergy of both cities, which aggravated their jealous competition. In such a petty context, was it wise to jeopardize a Catholic university which had accomplished so much? Roncetti thought not. He therefore recommended creating faculties of arts, theology, medicine, and law in

²⁰ APFR, SOCG (fév. 1876) B. Pâquet à Agnozzi, 24 janv. 1876.

Montreal, and affiliating them with Laval.²¹

Following this analysis, the Cardinals moved quickly. Inspired by Roncetti, they elaborated the decree and submitted it for the pontiff's approval by mid-February. The sentence unequivocally rejected a Catholic university for Montreal, and ordered the diocese to establish annexes at its own expense.

Laval would become a provincial institution, which entailed restructuring its entire administrative apparatus. A university council, replacing the Séminaire de Québec, would bring together the rector and the three most senior professors of each faculty, be they from Montreal or Quebec City. This body alone would appoint teaching staff, but would especially consider the opinions of Montreal professors before filling positions in the annexes. The provincial hierarchy was to watch over course content and discipline, but in an advisory rather than executive capacity. The decree prescribed a uniform curriculum without prejudice to Laval. Finally, it exhorted all collèges and séminaires to affiliate with the university.

The Cardinal Prefect was instructed to insist that Bourget submit completely in order to promote reconciliation between rival institutions and indeed between the two cities. The Congregation was confident that peace would return to the troubled province if Bourget were more favorably disposed to Laval.²²

21 APFR, Acta (fév. 1876) Rapport Cesare Roncetti, ± janvier 1876.

22 Ibid., Acta (fév. 1876) décret sur l'université, 13 fév. 1876.

Franchi faithfully echoed these sentiments. His letter amounted to a tacit condemnation of Bourget's administration. The Prefect praised Laval for the enormous sacrifices which it continued to make in the interests of the Canadian Church. He denounced the all-too prevalent practice of ventilating opinions on controversial religious issues in the press. This technique,

come l'ha provato nel caso una triste sperienza, più che a rimediare al male serve per inasprire gli animi e le questioni, e riesce di pregiudizio all'onore dell'Università e sovente anche della causa Cattolica.²³

Bishops could in future criticize Laval's curriculum only through the proper channels. Finally, the Cardinals insisted that straightforward affiliation between the Ecole de Médecine and Laval, was impossible. It was tantamount to creating a new university. The medical school would have to yield completely to university requirements.

In early March, 1876, the mood quickly darkened in Montreal as Harel leaked portions of the decree to his bishop. Even before he knew its full implications, Bourget was deeply pessimistic, especially about amending Laval's charter. Experience had taught him that when the government intervened in transactions between rival religious institutions, the party with greater political influence inevitably gained the

²³ ACAM, 820.001 Franchi à Bourget, 9 mars 1876.

"...as an unfortunate experience proved, embittered feelings and controversies, instead of remedying the situation. It also worked against the University's reputation and often against Catholicism itself."

upper hand. "... Sans faire des jugements téméraires le Gouvernement peut être amené, par des ressorts ... si faciles à faire jouer, à assumer seul la responsabilité de faire avorter ce plan d'amendement."²⁴ Besides, the bishop continued to feel that an annex of Laval could never meet the needs of the metropolis. He feared that this particular provision would remain unimplemented.

The Cathedral Chapter thoroughly agreed. The schools of law and medicine, they predicted, would fiercely resist any attempts to merge them by force with Laval. They would be supported by the Protestant universities to which they were affiliated and generally by all the enemies of Religion. The outcome would be a humiliating rout for the bishop. Moreover, Bourget would inevitably fail to reconcile his diocese and Laval. Montrealers would never finance educational establishments run from Quebec City. The Canons even doubted that Laval really wanted an annex. The university used this clever delay tactic, they thought, to prolong indefinitely its monopoly of higher education. Clearly, the times were not right for reconciliation.

Ce n'est pas dans ce moment critique pour Québec que les laïques de Montréal qui se sont vus si souvent rebutés par l'Université Laval, s'en rapprocheront plus volontiers.²⁵

The context was indeed critical. For Désautels, the future of Quebec Catholicism was at stake. He considered

24 ACAM, RCD 45 Bourget à Harel, 29 fév. 1876.

25 Ibid., 820.001 Les chanoines de la Cathédrale de St. Jacques à Bourget, 11 mai 1876.

that the decree did not resolve the controversy, but merely ushered in a new phase which involved all suffragans rather than Bourget alone. The bishops now had to overturn the provision making them mere advisors without effective power in the new institution. He suggested that they delegate Laflèche to achieve this goal.²⁶

In the midst of this feverish tension, in which feelings of betrayal and revenge mingled with apprehensions about the future, Bourget quietly and secretly wrote his decisive letter of resignation. He accepted Franchi's reproaches without apparent recrimination and without self-justification. The bishop declared himself incapable of implementing the decree, given the existing atmosphere in Quebec. He therefore recommended that Fabre be charged with the task.²⁷

The Propaganda moved with unusual swiftness. The Cardinals met in general congregation on May 8, 1876, and advised the Pope to grant the prelate's petition.²⁸ Consequently, Pius IX discharged Bourget of his office, giving him the honorific title of Archbishop.

Désautels was quite correct in stating that the university question was entering a new phase. Two new circumstances in the Quebec Church made this possible: the hierarchy's apparent political realignment in late 1874 and their

²⁶ ACAM, 820.001 Désautels à Paré, 6 avril 1876.
ADSJQ, Désautels à Paré, 2 mars 1876.

²⁷ APFR, SC 1876 Bourget à Franchi, 8 avr. 1876.

²⁸ ACAM, 149.999 Franchi à Bourget, 16 mai 1876.

progressive disenchantment with Laval. Since the programme catholique, a majority of bishops believed that Bourget was hostile to the Conservative Party. The Nouveau Monde's position on dismemberment and New Brunswick Schools and its mitigated support of the Reform Party in the 1874 elections reinforced this feeling. However, the diocesan organ's honeymoon with Mackenzie quickly ended. The appointment of old-time Rouges to the cabinet and the government's faltering policies on the School and Amnesty questions brought the newspaper into the mainstream of clerical political thought. It seemed as though the hierarchy had found the unity shattered by ultramontane thunderings in 1871.

At the same time, Quebec bishops were becoming increasingly frustrated with the overt political involvement of certain Laval professors. Such eccentricities were tolerated as long as they did not disrupt the political status quo, but when they were thought to lead to Macdonald's defeat, some episcopal brows frowned. Langevin, for instance, was markedly cooler with Laval after his brother's fall from power.²⁹ Following the 1875 provincial election, Racine, an ardent Conservative, observed: "Vous voyez par le résultat des élections à Québec et autour de Québec où prétendent nous mener ceux qui dirigent l'opinion politique à l'Université Laval."³⁰

29 ASQ, Séminaire 81 # 14, T. Hamel à H. A. Verreau, 13 mars 1874.

30 ANQ, Papiers A. Labelle, A. Racine à A. Labelle, 27 juil. 1875.

The possibility of a common front against Laval now existed. Had not Bourget railed against the free-thinking and liberal spirit reigning at the institution? Thus, at the provincial council held in October 1874, the hierarchy unanimously resolved that Laval professors refrain from active political involvement. The bishops also deplored the electoral excesses of certain candidates who used the episcopacy or the university's authority to support their aspirations.³¹

From Rome, Benjamin Pâquet endorsed these resolutions. The indiscreet behavior of some Laval professors in past elections fully justified the bishops' concern, he believed. Taschereau's envoy feared that this partisanship was a potential Achilles' heel for the university. The Archbishop, therefore, had to "... montre(r) les grosses dents aux MM. du Séminaire et leur ordonne(r) de passer le plus tôt possible un règlement conforme au désir des évêques...."³² The university, he stressed, always professed complete submission to episcopal wishes; now was the time to prove it.³³

The advice went unheeded. In the aftermath of the 1875 election, the bishops censured the Séminaire for its apparent recalcitrance. They noted that professors continued to don clerical trappings in order to give their candidacy prestige

31 ACAM, RCD 45 Mémoire du Séminaire de Québec aux Evêques du Québec, janv. 1876.

32 ASQ, Université 35 # 26 B. Pâquet à Bolduc, 15 nov. 1874.

33 Ibid., Université 35 # 25, B. Pâquet à Bolduc, 8 nov. 1874.

and authority. This obvious conflict of interest had to stop. The episcopacy unanimously suggested that the Séminaire expel professors who persisted in this path.³⁴

Several months later, Rector Hamel justified the Séminaire's inertia in a document which contained fascinating social comments. The episcopal resolutions were objectionable in principle, he argued, because they admitted a dangerous precedent: the university was made to relinquish part of its administrative functions to another body. In practice, however, they presaged nothing less than Laval's break-up. Hamel underlined the difficulties of attracting qualified staff, which had always plagued his institution. In the beginning, the Séminaire was reduced to recruiting professors from its most promising students. Incentives for university teaching were few. Job security was non-existent since Laval's governing council could dismiss any faculty member at will. This necessary provision guaranteed the moral rectitude and orthodoxy of the establishment. Salaries were very low. In fact, professors earned less than a common senior clerk. They obviously could not afford to support their families on incomes ranging from £75 to £300 yearly. The university regretted this situation, but could not afford higher wages.

Since these inducements were clearly inadequate to sustain interest in university teaching, Laval had to leave

³⁴ ACAM, RCD 45 Mémoire du Séminaire, janv. 1876.

professors free to fulfill their ambitions in other ways. Active participation in the political process instantly broadened the avenues of social mobility.

N'est-ce pas par le patronage politique que l'on se voit élever à la plupart des charges honorifiques lucratives? Telles sont celles de Juge, de Conseil de la Reine... du Coronaire ... (de) médecin du Port ... (de) médecin-inspecteur de l'Asile de Beauport, et les autres asiles pénitenciers etc.? Toutes ces positions sont à salaire fixe élevé, payées régulièrement, et par suite très enviées.³⁵

In the university's twenty-five year experience, Hamel maintained, these political commitments never produced conflicts of interest. The governing council ensured against any such excesses. It had explicitly forbidden professors from running in federal politics because their presence in Ottawa was clearly incompatible with their teaching duties. It would unquestionably prevent staff from supporting a hypothetical anti-Catholic party. Hamel conceded that active political involvement had its inconveniences. The spectacle of a professor on the hustings was certainly unattractive. Course schedules tended to be irregular to accommodate a teacher's various responsibilities. But, these were minor when compared with the ills which would befall Laval if the bishops' resolutions were implemented.

Besides, faculty members came to regard political participation as a right. The university would be hard-pressed to abolish it.

³⁵ AGAM, RCD 45 Mémoire du Séminaire, janv. 1876.

Le simple droit de citoyen que l'on reconnaît au prêtre ..., il faudra donc le refuser à un laïc parce qu'il est professeur... Eh quoi! Voici d'un côté un curé qui pourra prendre une part active dans la politique ... et mettre dans une élection tout le poids de son influence, et pourquoi pas? Il est citoyen en même temps que prêtre. Mais vous professeurs, vous ne pouvez user du même droit; vous n'êtes que professeur et tout juste un citoyen pour donner votre voix.³⁶

The episcopal guidelines did not involve a question of principle, Hamel contended. If they had, the bishops would have demanded that specific professors be removed. The Séminaire had, on its own initiative, investigated charges of liberalism brought against certain staff members, but found them to be unsubstantiated.

The Rector concluded that the hierarchy was acting out of partisan motives. Like the devil citing scripture, he quoted from various episcopal resolutions which stressed the importance of opposition in a constitutional system and which condemned partisanship because it placed factional above national interests. If a professor could legitimately participate in either political formation, Hamel reasoned, the bishops' recommendations lost their *raison d'être*.³⁶

The hierarchy remained unmoved. Taschereau alone dissented from a resolution, passed in mid-January 1876, which deplored the Rector's brief. The bishops believed that Hamel was clearly reflecting the Séminaire's wish to

³⁶ ACAM, RCD 45 Mémoire du Séminaire, janv. 1876.

³⁷ Ibid., RCD 45 Mémoire du Séminaire, janv. 1876.
Hamel à Bourget, 1 fév. 1876.

keep them out of university affairs.³⁸ Bourget privately expressed his thoughts on this matter to Hamel. He intimated that the Séminaire showed bad faith by failing to tell the bishops sooner about the serious problems involved in implementing their recommendations. Bourget insisted that professors had indeed committed excesses, notably in the 1875 election, by playing on the voter's clerical sentiments to seek office. Principles were in fact at stake when these same learned men then contested electoral verdicts on the grounds of undue clerical influence. This was a subtle but pernicious form of liberalism, he argued.

The bishop readily conceded that faculty members needed political outlets to supplement their small incomes. His colleagues certainly would not have obstructed these genuine aspirations

... si on leur eût... prouvé qu'il ne s'agissait jamais chez eux que d'une politique sage, saine et chrétienne, et reconnue comme telle par l'Eglise et ses pasteurs ... qu'en sollicitant les suffrages, ils (professeurs) se déclareraient les zélés partisans non des hommes, qui changent, mais des principes qui ne changent pas ... qu'ils seraient incorruptibles et inébranlables dans leur conduite et leur suffrage au Parlement.³⁹

An outside observer assessed this latest controversy for the Propaganda. Ignazio Persico, capuchin missionary, former bishop of Savannah, Georgia, and since 1873, pastor at Sillery, had developed close ties with Taschereau's advisors during his stay at the Archdiocese. His letter

38 ACAM, RCD 45 Réunion des Evêques du Québec à St-Hyacinthe, 17 janv. 1876.

39 Ibid., RCD 45 Bourget à Hamel, 23 janv. 1876.

to Franchi brushed an interesting portrait of the Archbishop, but for the rest, repeated many of Hamel's arguments.

The capuchin pastor was convinced that partisanship motivated the hierarchy from the outset. The bishops belonged to the Conservative Party, he maintained, while certain Laval professors were Liberals. A confrontation resulted. He blamed Taschereau, however, for the rapid and steady deterioration of relations between the episcopacy and Laval. At provincial council meetings, the Archbishop was incredibly weak and indecisive. In 1874, for instance, after resisting his suffragans' directives at length, the Metropolitan finally subscribed to them, much to everyone's amazement. Later, he instructed the Séminaire to ignore them. In 1875, he again voted with his colleagues to reprimand Laval's governing council, in effect for following his instructions. The Séminaire deplored this dangerous equivocation. Finally, Taschereau gave his university much-needed support by opposing the January resolution. By then, however, Laval faced a very critical situation which the Metropolitan alone could not remedy.

Persico seconded Hamel's argument that the bishops' guidelines threatened Laval's existence.

Chiunque conosce questo paese può facilmente convincersi che qui tutto è politica, voglio dire che la vita sociale del Canada è eminentemente politica. Lo stesso commercio colle arti ed industrie trovasi intimamente dipendente della politica.⁴⁰

40 APFR, SC 1876 Persico à Franchi, 20 aprile 1876. "Anyone who knows this country easily realizes that all is politics, that is, Canadian society is eminently political. Commerce, the arts, and industry, are intimately dependent on politics."

Why should the rule therefore admit exceptions for university professors?

This letter produced an immediate impact in Rome. Franchi believed the evidence sufficient to prove "... che l'eseguire tali risoluzioni esporebbe l'Università Laval a perdere la maggior parte se non tutti i Professori colla morale certezza di non poter sopperire alla deficienza."⁴¹ Accordingly, he urged Taschereau to adopt guidelines which better served the interests of the university and the Canadian Church.

If Rome expected the storm to subside with Bourget's resignation, it was sadly mistaken. Franchi's letter unleashed a torrent of protest and heightened antagonism toward Laval. Taschereau's suffragans complained of being misrepresented. They had never directly ordered professors to cease all political involvement, they argued, but merely recommended what certain priests at Laval had long demanded. The bishops sought to avoid the scandalous image of Catholic university professors marching "... à la tête des libéraux, qui foulaiet aux pieds leurs Mandements et leurs Lettres Pastorales...."⁴² They pretended that Laval would enjoy greater public confidence, once the hierarchy could trust its faculty members.

The suffragans delegated Laflèche to expound their

⁴¹ ACAM, 820.001 Franchi a Taschereau, 29 maggio 1876. "... that by implementing these resolutions, Laval would run the risk of losing the greater part, if not all its professors and would certainly be unable to fill the vacant positions."

⁴² APFR, SC 1876 Fabre, Racine, Moreau et Duhamel à Pie IX, 13 juil. 1876.

ideas directly to the Pope and the Cathedral Chapter of Montreal asked Godefroi Lamarche to defend diocesan interests. Fabre specifically wanted Lamarche to impress upon the Cardinals that establishing an annex in Montreal was impossible for the reasons already outlined by the Cathedral Canons.⁴³

De Angelis greeted the episcopal ambassadors in Rome with news of the papal bull, Inter varias sollicitudines, and its unbounded praise for Laval. He shared with them a deep sense of betrayal. "... Il baise la main qui le frappe avec nous; mais il le fait des larmes dans les yeux (sic)". Nevertheless, they determined "... de pousser jusqu'au bout la forte vertu de patience."⁴⁴

Laflèche and Lamarche decided on a cautious and moderate approach, since the Propaganda considered the university question settled. They sought to avoid polemics at all cost, emphasizing instead the theme of peace within the Quebec Church. They maintained that this goal was unattainable as long as liberal elements at Laval, the true cause of dissension, continued to teach. But, when pressed to prove that these elements did in fact exist, the delegates became circumspect. Laflèche answered: "C'est là une question de fait que seuls ceux qui sont sur les lieux sont compétents à juger...."⁴⁵ Lamarche simply affirmed that, whether or

43 APFR, SC 1876 Fabre à Lamarche, 3 sept. 1876.

44 ACAM, 901.147 Lamarche à J. L. Mongeau, 31 août 1876.

45 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à Fabre, 21 sept. 1876.

not evidence supported these allegations, certain university professors, by their very presence, provoked controversy. Their dismissal, therefore, became imperative.⁴⁶

Ecclesiastical peace had another natural corollary: effective episcopal control over faculty appointments and dismissals. The envoys argued that the hierarchy's authority over Laval remained largely symbolic, even though the university acquired provincial status.⁴⁷ Lamarche denied that Laval's charter would have to be amended in order to give the bishops increased power. Rome merely had to stipulate that the Archbishop could not appoint teaching staff without his suffragans' consent. This would obviate any recourse to the British Parliament. But, even if this latter expedient became necessary, the university could easily secure the provincial legislature's full support. Either way, Rome could transform Laval into a Louvain without major inconvenience.⁴⁸

Lamarche's persistence earned him a patron, Cardinal Oreglia, whom he cultivated assiduously. The Cardinal "me parâit un des plus actifs de la Propaganda et certainement très intéressé par toutes les affaires canadiennes...."⁴⁹ With the prelate's concurrence, Lamarche advised the bishops

46 ACAM, 901.147 Lamarche au Cardinal Oreglia, 29 sept. 1876.

47 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à E. Hicks, 15 août 1876.

48 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à Fabre, 30 sept. 1876.

49 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à J. L. Mongeau, 24 sept. 1876.

on their best course of action. At the October episcopal conference, they should demand greater authority over Laval and also specify which professors were to be removed. The Canon suggested Benjamin Pâquet, François Langelier, and E. J. Flynn. If Taschereau balked, the bishops would seek redress in Rome. In the interim, Lamarche would continue to mold the Cardinals' opinions. Oreglia believed that the chances of victory were high.⁵⁰

Following Taschereau's refusal to alter either Laval's structure or its personnel, Laflèche prepared a brief according to Lamarche's instructions. The bishop of Trois-Rivières identified Langelier and Flynn as the guilty professors who prostituted episcopal writings in order to win elections. He alleged that Langelier was in league with the Church's persecutors. Three bishops, Fabre, Moreau and Langevin concurred.⁵¹ Racine endorsed his colleagues' demands, but felt that evidence against the professors was lacking.⁵²

Rome, of course, deferred the matter to the papal legate. However, Benjamin Pâquet's recent appointment as secret papal chamberlain boded ill for Montreal's cause.

* * *

For two years, the Propaganda studied compromise

50 ACAM, 901.147 Lamarche à Bourget, 27 sept. 1876.

51 APFR, SC 1877 D Mémoire Laflèche, Fabre, Moreau et Langevin, 5 fév. 1877.

52 Ibid., SC 1877 D Racine à Franchi, 23 janv. 1877.

solutions to the university question. The Franchi scheme made demands on both parties. It asked Laval's governing council to abandon its jurisdiction over courses and hiring. On the other hand, it offered Bourget no guarantee that the proposed higher university body would prescribe a curriculum acceptable to the Jesuits or the Ecole de Médecine. Indeed in subscribing to the Franchi plan, the bishop was taking a greater risk than Laval since his colleagues showed great concern with academic standards, as their subsequent responses to the Prefect indicated.

On first impulse, the Santori blueprints seem detrimental to Laval because they suggested lowering academic norms. Yet, the hierarchy would again settle disparities in curriculum. In the consultor's first proposal, the terms for the Ecole de Médecine's affiliation were not those put forth by the doctors in 1862, but those to be determined by the bishops. In his second plan, Santori specifically met two of Laval's requirements: the Archbishop's exclusive and jealously-guarded right over faculty appointments at Laval and uniformity of courses, discipline, and fees throughout the province.

Thus, both Franchi and Santori harmonized Bourget's demand for an independent establishment with Taschereau's insistence on norms by resorting to a mediatory body, the episcopal council. This was the only fair expedient to resolve such apparently divergent interests.

Laval stiffly rejected these schemes, but for reasons which were largely pretexts. Amending the charter posed

greater problems in the fertile mind of some Archdiocesan advisor, than in reality. Moreover, the bishops' participation in Laval's administration did not require, as some alleged, their constant presence in Quebec City, nor their most productive energies. Indeed, Franchi specifically proposed that they appoint a special commission to rationalize norms. The question of standards revealed a much more serious problem. However, a university tolerating the disruption of courses at election time certainly could allow for a slight lowering of standards. The Jesuit conspiracy, in which Pâquet doubtless believed, was closer to Laval's real motivations and tied in with Hamel's fear of flag pitted against flag. This justified a tight university monopoly.

Faced with this determined opposition, Rome was forced to abandon its conciliatory policy and to crush the diocese of Montreal. Roncetti's report provided the Propaganda its rationale. It also indicated the effectiveness of Pâquet's strategy. Had not the Archdiocese always maintained that petty interests, disguised in ideological trappings, fomented unrest in the province and severely jeopardized ecclesiastical interests? Rome finally came to see the controversies in Quebec from the Archdiocesan perspective. The pontifical decree was nothing more than a variation on Taschereau's 1870 offer of affiliation. The episcopal university council was mere window dressing. Finally, Franchi's admonitory letter to Bourget spoke

eloquently of the Congregation's total conversion to Laval's theses. In turning the clock back six years, the Cardinals could not ignore that in the interim the university dispute had gone through an intense ideological phase. They must therefore bear responsibility for the disruptions and disquiet which the pontifical decree provoked in the Quebec Church.

The bishops' growing politicization probably altered the Propaganda's perception of the problem. Rome must have regarded their attempt to end political participation at Laval as indicative of this dangerous trend. For Bourget, however, this initiative harmonized with his long-standing policy on relations between politicians and clerics. The principle at stake here, as with dismemberment, was the Church's independence from partisan influence. On the campaign trail, Langelier used his status as professor at a Catholic university, cited some episcopal letter, or claimed clerical support to curry the electorate's favor. He then contested elections for undue clerical influence. Both Hamel and Pâquet admitted his excesses. The problem was therefore very real. Yet, the Séminaire de Québec preferred to ignore it, neither seeking to discuss it further with the hierarchy nor to implement the episcopal resolutions.

Circumstantial evidence linking the episcopacy's directives to partisanship did exist. Certain bishops were more amenable to these motives. Moreover, the

ambiguity which totally enshrouded the term 'liberalism' reinforced Roman suspicions: were the bishops referring to a political party or to a philosophical movement? In their overwhelming desire to present a moderate and conciliatory image in Rome, Laflèche and Lamarche failed to show in detail what made Langelier and Flynn liberals, and therefore defeated their purpose. Bourget's tragedy was to be accused and convicted of partisanship against which he had combatted for the better part of his stewardship.

CHAPTER X
LIBERALISM UNMASKED

In his last years as bishop of Montreal, Bourget seemed almost obsessed with politics, with the struggle against an elusive foe, Catholic liberalism. Yet, he regarded this confrontation as religious, rather than political, involving the clergy's fundamental rights within the State. It was for him an extension of the programme catholique campaign to eliminate pernicious principles from public affairs and promote genuine Catholic candidates for election. The bishop no more intended to destroy the Liberal Party in 1875-6 than the Conservative Party in 1871-2, although in both instances he was concerned more with one political formation than the other. Instead, his efforts were aimed at chastening the whole political system.

Despite Bourget's noble intentions, the question very rapidly became a partisan one. Liberal newspapers and politicians, sensing that the bishop's position threatened their electoral support, sought to exonerate the whole party of liberalism just as a few years earlier, Conservatives desperately tried to protect their leaders from the gallican stigma. The prelate deplored these attempts to gloss over fundamental principles for the sake of petty partisan interests. Frustrated, he looked for more effective means to combat the enemy and to preserve meaning to his struggle.

Rome observed Bourget's actions through the eyes of a handful of priests from the Archdiocese of Quebec who were convinced that he and the majority of the provincial clergy acted from partisan motives. They predicted baleful consequences for the Quebec Church if the prelate were permitted to pursue his course to the end. Their fears undoubtedly incited Franchi to act promptly on Bourget's offer to resign. The Cardinal Prefect also attempted to stop clerical interference in the electoral process.

The Propaganda's actions plunged the diocese of Montreal and nearly the entire ecclesiastical province into crisis. Rome seemed to be saying that Catholic liberalism did not exist in Quebec and that, consequently, the clergy was meddling in purely secular matters. Reaction sprang as much from partisan as doctrinal considerations. The bishops called on the Pope formally to condemn Catholic liberalism in Canada. They also enjoined their Roman envoys to refute charges of undue clerical influence.

The Laflèche-Lamarche mission was partially successful. The delegates extracted a rather innocuous statement from Pius IX in which he praised the episcopacy's efforts against Catholic liberalism. The Propaganda, however, left the far more important question of undue clerical influence to the papal legate. Laflèche and Lamarche felt satisfied. Yet, the writing was on the wall. Franchi revealed the Congregation's deepest apprehensions about the clergy's electoral involvement. Laflèche and Lamarche exacerbated these fears

with verbal forays against the Liberal Party. This approach transformed into a political issue what Bourget initially regarded as a religious question.

* * *

The bishop of Montreal believed that elections should lead to the triumph of sound principles. To achieve this goal, the Catholic electorate had the duty to choose the ablest, most trustworthy, most committed candidates. All too often, however, partisanship dominated these contests, turning the voters' attention away from fundamental issues, focusing instead on questions of personality or self-interest, and leading to such excesses as bribery, drunkenness, and violence. Bourget considered that the Catholic press and clergy had a special mission to enlighten the voters, to keep their minds trained on principles.

This mission required that they refrain from partisanship. During the 1874 election, Bourget asked the Nouveau Monde to stop endorsing specific candidates. The newspaper could, he suggested, open its pages to those who wished to profess their principles, thereby leaving primary responsibility for wooing votes to the politicians themselves. The electors would then have enough information to cast their ballot "sans craindre de se tromper" and without the Nouveau Monde's explicit direction.¹ Similarly, Bourget reprimanded the pastor of l'Epiphanie for trying to impose his Conservative

1 ACAM, RLB 22 Bourget à Laflèche, 12 janv. 1874.

biases on a parishioner. In this riding, Ludger Forrest, Liberal, was running against the Conservative incumbent, Hilaire Hurteau. The Nouveau Monde considered both men programmistes.

... Quand un homme respectable déclare qu'il a voté ... pour celui qu'il croit capable de remplir son devoir; il doit être cru sur sa parole. Si un curé se croit autorisé à tellement maîtriser une élection, qu'il faille toujours voter dans son sens, sous peine de refus des sacrements, il est exposé à faire des fausses consciences ou à éloigner les gens des sacrements; car il faut bien convenir qu'il peut se tromper.²

This dedication to principle was particularly crucial because, in some elections, wolves paraded in sheep's clothing. For instance, Amable Beaupré, former editor of Le Pays, who still boasted of his title to Rouge sympathizers in Joliette, claimed, when addressing Catholic voters, to support the programme catholique. It was imperative, Bourget thought, to unmask such charlatans, by denouncing their false doctrines, instead of identifying them by name from the pulpit. His instruction to the pastors of the county was deliberately non-partisan: "Il faut affirmer en toute lettre qu'il n'est pas permis de voter pour des candidats, qu'ils soient conservateurs ou libéraux, qui se déclarent hostiles à l'Eglise et à l'enseignement de ses pasteurs...."³

Catholics could not vote for politicians who belonged to or sympathized with the Institut Canadien; who propagated

² ACAM, RLB 22 Bourget à P. Bédard, 27 fév. 1874.

³ Ibid., RLB 23 Bourget aux curés du comté de Joliette, 2 mars 1875.

ideas condemned in the Syllabus; who denied by word or deed the priest's right to expound on Catholic principles during elections. For Bourget, the matter was clear: only anti-clerics would support anticlerical candidates. It was equally obvious that both would be denied the sacraments, unless they showed signs of true repentance. Religion, after all, could not be made to serve cynical politicians who exploited it to garner votes.

The bishop of Montreal, however, also stressed the voter's freedom of choice. This prerogative was more than just theoretical, since the Nouveau Monde endorsed many candidates, including Félix Geoffrion, who openly upheld the Mackenzie administration in the 1874 election. The newspaper's policy continued to divide the hierarchy and caused a great deal of controversy in the diocese of Montreal. Canon Joseph Séguin, speaking for many of his colleagues, urged Bourget to dissociate himself from Lamarche. The censor, he alleged, was actively encouraging men against whom the clergy fought twenty-five years earlier and who were still far from orthodox.⁴ Mgr. Pinsonnault and the Franc Parleur berated the Nouveau Monde for its anti-national and liberal policies.⁵ La Minerve also deplored the newspaper's alliance with liberalism.⁶

Bourget rejected these charges. He maintained that the

4 ACAM, 780.034 J. Séguin à Bourget, 31 janv. 1874.

5 Ibid., 459.112 Pinsonnault à Bourget, 5 juil. 1875

6 Ibid., 574.000 C. Dansereau à Bourget, 15 janv. 1874.

Nouveau Monde had always struggled against liberalism and was unflinchingly committed to the conservative principles of the Syllabus and of other papal documents.⁷ Lamarche echoed these sentiments. The newspaper's only goal in the 1874 election, he affirmed, was "de faire entrer dans le Gouvernement et de faire accepter par les hommes au pouvoir le plus d'éléments vraiment catholiques et conservateurs possibles."⁸ Thus, the voter was free to choose from among candidates of moderate opinion.

The bishop of Montreal wanted to involve his colleagues in this mission of enlightenment. In May 1873, he urged them to denounce Catholic liberalism.⁹ The bishops, who had not themselves experienced the frustrations of dismemberment, condemned the theory, but affirmed that it hardly existed in Quebec. Two events, however, altered episcopal opinion: the election of a Liberal government in Ottawa and the growing clamor against undue clerical influence. Partisan and doctrinal interests converged in the fall of 1875 to produce the resolutions discouraging professors from active politics and the joint pastoral against Catholic liberalism.

The episcopacy's letter, written by Taschereau himself,¹⁰

7 ACAM, RLB 22 Bourget à C. Dansereau, 16 janv. 1874.

8 ASTR, Lamarche à Laflèche, 25 janv. 1874.

9 ASJCF, 2057 copie Bourget à Laflèche, 28 août 1873.

10 APFR, SC 1876 Fabre, Racine, Moreau et Duhamel à Pie IX, 13 juil. 1876.

espoused many of the ideas which Bourget especially had championed. It lashed out at the two faces of liberalism which, while allowing the State to violate the Church's prerogatives, and the laity to criticize ecclesiastical teachings, banished religion from politics and the clergy from public affairs. The bishops expounded the Aquinian concept of politics whose ultimate goal was the common good. They condemned attempts to place the party's welfare above all else. In this context, they maintained, the clergy had a vital and noble role to play within the republic.

The hierarchy then left the lofty plane of ideas to warn the faithful that a political party could be considered dangerous by its record or that of its leaders and press.¹¹ Ironically, this statement had a non-partisan meaning only in the diocese of Montreal, where the Nouveau Monde had excoriated Cartier and La Minerve for their liberalism.

Much to Bourget's dismay, the joint pastoral did not silence the cries of undue clerical influence. Indeed, they reached a fever pitch with Lucius Huntington's Argenteuil speech. This was not an isolated incident. The Bien Public, the Herald, and the Witness supported the cabinet minister's sortie against clerical partisanship.¹² The subsequent federal byelection in Chambly provided new fuel for the fire. L. O. David, in the Bien Public, accused most county priests of condemning the Reform Party from the pulpit. He singled

11 APFR, SC 1875 Lettre pastorale collective des évêques du Québec, 22 sept. 1875.

12 Nouveau Monde, 5 janv. 1876. 11 janv. 1876.

out P. E. Lussier, curate at Boucherville, whose sermon, he alleged, subverted the constitution with its threats of mortal sin and excommunication.¹³ The Liberal candidate's subsequent defeat provoked a new wave of indignation in the partisan press.¹⁴

Bourget deplored these journalistic abuses. He had personally approved Lussier's homily which, he added, contained not the slightest allusion to politics or to excommunication. The opposition candidate in Chambly had openly declared himself a Rouge and moderate liberal. His followers perverted episcopal teachings by insisting that the joint pastoral had nothing to do with Canadian politics. Some even intimated that the hierarchy had erred. Lussier was therefore justified in correcting these false impressions and reminding the faithful of Church doctrine. At no time did the curate threaten his parishioners.¹⁵ Moreover, the bishop was profoundly shocked by partisan interpretations of Archbishop Lynch's recent open letter to Mackenzie. Liberal newspapers were intimating that the Toronto prelate censured the Quebec clergy's conduct. These attempts to sow division among the clergy and the hierarchy for partisan motives were intolerable. He decided to intervene.

On February 1, 1876, the bishop of Montreal issued his own letter execrating Catholic liberalism. It differed from

13 Bien Public, 8 janv. 1876.

14 Witness, 24 janv. 1876.

15 Nouveau Monde, 1 fév. 1876.

the joint pastoral in that it made no reference to political parties. Bourget decried all the violent assaults on the clergy alluding to Huntington's speech without naming it. He preached respect for parish priests: "J'écoute mon Curé, mon Curé écoute l'Evêque, l'Evêque écoute le Pape, le Pape écoute Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ." Liberal opinion saw in this proposition the new dogma of the curé's personal infallibility.¹⁶ The prelate finally forbade Catholics under pain of minor excommunication to read newspapers which attacked the clergy.

Bourget was dissatisfied with his pastoral because it lacked a clear-cut dogmatic definition of Catholic liberalism. He instructed his Roman envoy, Téléphore Harel, to consult with Catholic intellectuals and to pour over the most recent theological theses in order to delimit the error. The matter, he thought, was urgent because supposedly good Catholics

... ne cessent de nous demander: ce que c'est le libéralisme; et nous leur disons avec les meilleurs écrivains que nous avons sous la main. Mais ils ne manquent pas de raisons spécieuses, pour répliquer.¹⁷

The prelate also wanted to know whether his injunction against reading anticlerical newspapers was too strict.

Were these actions aimed at condemning the Liberal Party?

16 It is interesting to note in this respect that Mason Wade, himself a Catholic historian, accredited this interpretation. Vide, The French Canadians (New York, Macmillan, 1955), 360.

17 ACAM, RCD 45 Bourget à Harel, 6 fév. 1876. Bourget à Harel, 14 fév. 1876.

Superficially, it seemed that way. The Nouveau Monde had turned against the government with all the fervor of a disillusioned convert. Prior to the Montreal-West byelection, the newspaper published de Angelis' opinion that Catholics could, in certain cases, support a freemason running against a liberal. It was easy to extrapolate a condemnation of the Reform Party from this. Between Huntington's speech and Mackenzie's public repudiation, Bourget termed the government "un Ministère libéral dans toute la force du terme."¹⁸ He wondered whether Catholics could in conscience belong to the governing party or vote for candidates supporting the cabinet. Finally, his pastoral seemed to transform the parish priest's private political views into dogma.

The bishop of Montreal, however, always distinguished between personal opinion and Church doctrine. He had certainly taken considerable distance from the Liberal government, but this did not mean that he condemned the ruling party. Fabre in fact showed that doctrinally Bourget's concerns remained non-partisan. "Comme V.G. le faisait remarquer, à notre dernière réunion à St-Hyacinthe (Septembre 1875), il y a des libéraux catholiques parmi les conservateurs."¹⁹ In the same vein, the Nouveau Monde told its readers that when dealing with public issues such as the Amnesty, New Brunswick Schools, railway and financial politics, it did so in the name of equity, not religion,

18 ACAM, RCD 45 Bourget à Harel, 21 janv. 1876.

19 Ibid., 901.151 Fabre à Bourget, 10 mars, 1876.

Its editorials were not a matter of dogma.²⁰

As confusion persisted, Bourget gladly published an explanation of his pastoral in the Nouveau Monde.²¹ The article, written by Harel, but bearing de Angelis' name, emphasized that Catholic liberalism was condemned as a religious, not a political error. The bishop had no intention of applying his doctrine to Canadian political parties. His pastoral respected earlier episcopal guidelines to the clergy on political questions.²²

Harel privately warned Bourget that his "J'écoute mon curé" admonition, while theoretically sound, could in practice lead to excesses from the pulpit. Only when a pastor dealt with religion could the proposal be taken literally. But, in politics, the parishioner had a right to differ from his curé.²³ Bourget fully concurred. "Je trouve que vous avez été très sobre; et de fait vous pouviez et deviez en dire davantage."²⁴

Bourget also condoned Mgr. Lynch's open letter to Alexander Galt in the Globe.²⁵ The Archbishop of Toronto assured Galt that the pope would never instruct Catholics, as a matter of dogma, to vote for a particular party. But, the political animal known as a Catholic Liberal was

20 Nouveau Monde, 18 janv. 1876.

21 ACAM, RCD 45 Bourget à Harel, 12 mai 1876.

22 Nouveau Monde, 11 mai 1876.

23 ACAM, 990.025 Harel à Bourget, 12 mars 1876.

24 Ibid., RCD 45 Bourget à Harel, 31 mars 1876.

25 Ibid., RCD 45 Bourget à Harel, 12 mai 1876.

fundamentally different from the doctrinally suspect individual, the liberal Catholic. He supposed that Bourget's pastoral meant to denounce the latter. "... Until it is proven that Catholics are denied the Sacraments or admission to the Church, simply because they voted against the Conservative candidate, and with the Liberals in politics, our affirmation remains uncontradicted."²⁶ The prelate concluded that the Catholic Church did not have a different policy in Ontario than in Quebec.

Meanwhile, priests at the Séminaire de Québec and a few like-minded clergymen agitated to stop this alleged clerical partisanship. Their object was twofold. They first put intense pressure on Taschereau, if not to repudiate the collective pastoral, at least to exculpate the Liberal Party. Liberal politicians also contributed to this venture. The second goal was to keep the Propaganda well-informed on religio-political developments in the province. To this end, Benjamin Paquet transmitted pertinent letters and newspaper articles to the Cardinal-Prefect.

From these emerged a very unflattering image of the Quebec hierarchy. Ignazio Persico believed that the bishops were not equal to the demands of their office. Many were men of passion.

... E cosa evidente che parecchi Vescovi si mostrano non solo partigiani, ma vanno agli estremi; e questo non per tutelare principi religiosi, ma semplicemente per fini politici o personali. Tale stato di cose ha prodotto

26 The Globe, J. J. Lynch to A. T. Galt, April 10, 1876.

confusione o scoraggiamento...²⁷

Louis Pâquet agreed. The joint pastoral, he maintained, was nothing more than a political manifesto which seriously imperilled civil rights in Canada.²⁸ Since its publication, the episcopacy, not the lower clergy, was responsible for the agitation in the province.²⁹ J. B. Z. Bolduc intimated that bishops were channelling most of their energies in politics which severely crippled their authority and caused much animosity. Of the Archdiocese, he wrote: "La vie y devient très pénible et tout à fait désagréable. On n'entend parler que de politique...."³⁰

The bishop of Montreal came in for particular criticism. Bolduc reported that Taschereau was alarmed by his suffragan's pastoral, considering it "... tout à fait hors de propos, et propre à mettre le feu aux étoupes."³¹ Louis Pâquet was less kind than the Archbishop. He cited popular opinion which considered Bourget to be completely insane and added, "Franchement, c'est l'opinion la plus charitable."³²

27 APFR, SC 1876 Persico a Franchi, 20 aprile 1876.

"It is obvious that many bishops are not only partisan, but go to extremes. They do so not to advance religious principles, but merely for political or personal reasons. This state of affairs has produced confusion or discouragement."

28 Ibid., SC 1876 L. Pâquet à B. Pâquet, 31 déc. 1875.

29 Ibid., SC 1876 L. Pâquet à B. Pâquet, 17 fév. 1876.

30 Ibid., SC 1876 Bolduc à B. Pâquet, 21 janv. 1876.

31 Ibid., SC 1876 Bolduc à B. Pâquet, 11 fév. 1876.

32 Ibid., SC 1876 L. Pâquet à B. Pâquet, 17 fév. 1876.

From these reports Rome also learned that the hierarchy was bent on annihilating the Liberal Party. Pierre Sax, pastor at St-Romuald, cited an unidentified bishop who shamelessly acknowledged that such was the goal of the joint pastoral. Sax expressed his anguish and disgust that the episcopacy should treat his Liberal friends so unfairly. They had repudiated Doutre and proclaimed their submission to ecclesiastical authority. Yet, they were reviled as liars and Communards.³³ Bolduc added that the Liberals were innocent victims of persecution who showed nothing but goodwill to their assailants.³⁴

The consequences of this undue interference, they believed, were catastrophic. Louis Pâquet predicted that the Quebec clergy would destroy political freedom in the province by using the joint pastoral to mould a malleable population to their partisan designs. While French Canadians might placidly accept this tutelage, Protestants would fight vigorously for their civil rights. Already, there were ominous portents of backlash. "Nos dernières imprudences et nos dernières fautes" had led to the formation of the Protestant Defence Alliance. If French Canadians continued to abuse their place in Confederation, legislative union would result.³⁵

Pierre Sax reported that Edward Blake was threatening

33 APFR, SC 1876 P. Sax à Franchi, 28 janv. 1876.

34 Ibid., SC 1876 Bolduc à B. Pâquet, 21 janv. 1876.

35 Ibid., SC 1876 L. Pâquet à B. Pâquet, 31 déc. 1875.

to lead Orangemen in a crusade against Catholics. The break-up of Confederation, he speculated, would irreparably harm the Church. Its legislative privileges, the special relationship between prelates and politicians, would come to an end. The new era would usher in non-denominational schools.³⁶ J. C. C. Marquis, pastor at St-Célestin, believed that Bourget and Laflèche, by upholding the programme catholique, were leading Canada to a war of religion "... et vu que les protestants ont dans la Confédération une majorité de quatre contre un, il est évident qu'ils peuvent nous écraser quand bon leur semblera...."³⁷

The long-term solution to this serious problem had to come from Rome, not from Quebec. Persico considered that Taschereau could not master the situation. He regretted that the Archbishop, who appeared cool, thoughtful, and self-confident, acted so impulsively, erratically, and without consultation. "... Se non é caldo partigiano in politica, é un uomo di una debolezza estrema che si fa girare da alcuni Vescovi che lo sono."³⁸ Persico insisted that Rome appoint good bishops in Quebec. Bolduc, for his part, wanted the Pope to send a delegate who could redeem religion in Canada.³⁹

Pierre Tremblay, defeated Liberal incumbent in Charlevoix, seconded the campaign. He complained to Rome that

36 APFR, SC 1876 P. Sax à Franchi, 28 janv. 1876.

37 Ibid., SC 1876 Marquis à B. Paquet, 11 janv. 1876.

38 Ibid., SC 1876. I. Persico a Franchi, 29 aprile 1876.

"If he is not a passionate partisan, he is a man of extreme weakness who lets himself be led by certain bishops who are."

39 Ibid., SC 1876 Bolduc à B. Paquet, 11 fév. 1876.

Taschereau refused to judge the concrete cases of undue clerical influence submitted to him. The Archbishop did not even deign to reply to Tremblay's renewed entreaties for an ecclesiastical hearing. The politician therefore begged Franchi either to decide on these cases or allow him to go before the civil courts.⁴⁰ On this specific question, Rome refused to become involved.⁴¹

Nevertheless, the Séminaire de Québec's endeavors proved to be a complete success. Two days after Franchi formally accepted Bourget's resignation, he wrote Taschereau a letter which was intended to inspire leadership and determination in him as much as to condemn undue clerical influence. The Cardinal Prefect obviously drew from Pâquet's sources. Although having specific data only on the Charlevoix by-election, he referred to the clergy's abuses as a generalized phenomenon. In familiar terms, he dealt with the dangers which clerical partisanship presented to the Church in Canada "... dove essendo i cattolici per numero assai inferiori ai Protestanti costituiranno sempre una piccola parte della rappresentanza politica nel parlamento federale...."⁴² While asking Taschereau to suggest the best means for resolving the problem, the Prefect stressed

40 APFR, SC 1876 P. A. Tremblay à Franchi, 14 avril 1876.

41 Ibid., SC 1876 Persico a Franchi, 20 aprile 1876.

42 ACAM., 149.999 Franchi a Taschereau, 18 maggio 1876.
 "...where Catholics being a minority, will always constitute a small delegation to Parliament...."

that the clergy should intervene in politics with moderation and only when religion and society required it. Franchi and Taschereau were on the wave length: the Archbishop issued his own pastoral on clerical interference one week after the Cardinal sent his letter.

Franchi's missive and the news that Bourget would soon step down provoked a veritable groundswell in the province. Benjamin Pâquet confided to Fabre that Bourget was dismissed because of his political meddling.⁴³ Liberal newspapers fully exploited these rumors. Clerical reaction came swiftly and forcefully. In the diocese of Montreal, well over two hundred parish priests, the Jesuits and the Oblates as well as all bishops, except Taschereau and Langevin, petitioned the Propaganda to revoke Bourget's resignation. The Cathedral Chapter wired the Cardinal Prefect to halt arrangements for episcopal succession until the Canons presented their case. Vicar General Hypolyte Moreau rather awkwardly explained their initiative to Fabre "Nous ne pouvons nous faire à l'idée que notre Evêque bien-aimé va cesser d'administrer son vaste diocèse, surtout dans des circonstances aussi critiques et aussi difficiles...."⁴⁴ The Propaganda agreed to wait.

The Chapter's brief chronicled Bourget's achievements during thirty-six years of office: his extensive liturgical

43 ACAM, 902.001 B. Pâquet à Fabre, 4 juin, 1876.

44 Ibid., 319.300 H. Moreau à Fabre, 12 juin 1876.

and theological reforms; his struggle against gallicanism; his enormous influence on ecclesiastical legislation; his unrelenting campaign against the Institut Canadien. When recounting Bourget's exploits against Catholic liberalism, though, the Canons adopted an ambiguous idiom. They argued that, despite the bishop's unrelenting efforts, the Institut Canadien's spirit still haunted 'le parti libéral' which had put into power a federal cabinet hostile to Quebec's Catholic interests. Provincially, Bourget's influence had kept the liberals at bay and inspired a truly ultramontane government. The Cathedral Chapter assured Rome that the bishop was at his intellectual peak and enjoyed good health.⁴⁵

Télesphore Harel related the Propaganda's reaction to this brief. In the first place, officials were displeased by the inference that either Bourget's partisanship or his failing physical and mental health caused them to accept his resignation. Second, they considered the Canons' submission to be essentially partisan, depicting Bourget as a foe of the whole Liberal Party.

Cette manière de poser Mgr. Bourget ... devant une Congrégation Romaine, que l'on savait déjà informée des débats politiques, et dont on ignorait la future réponse ... ne semble pas politique; ... le Mémoire semble vouloir ... imposer des idées toutes favorables au parti conservateur et toutes défavorables au parti libéral ou réformiste - laquelle chose ne pourrait que rendre suspects aux Cardinaux ces avancés.⁴⁶

45 APFR, SC 1876 Mémoire du Chapitre de la Cathédrale de St-Jacques, 17 juin 1876.

46 ACAM, RCD 46 Journal T. Harel, juillet 1876.

Bolduc, for his part, urged the Propaganda to stand by its policies. Given the critical context, any reversal would confirm Protestant suspicion that Bourget controlled the Holy See. The Archdiocesan attorney also warned that Montreal's Cathedral Canons, gripped by panic, were furiously conspiring to preserve the power which they had usurped for so many years from Bourget and which would escape them completely once Fabre became bishop. They were terrorizing the local clergy with their petitions because they well knew that Fabre would follow Taschereau's moderate policies.⁴⁷

The hierarchy, apart from opposing Bourget's resignation, took issue with Franchi's letter. Except for Taschereau and Langevin, they presented a common brief to Pius IX on undue clerical influence, while Bourget and Racine made separate submissions to the Propaganda.⁴⁸ In substance, they argued that these charges were unfounded and that the Archbishop was unfit to discuss the question with the Congregation. The clergy, they contended, had scrupulously observed episcopal instructions. Moreover, the bishops would have immediately called guilty priests to order had abuses occurred. Bourget, for his part, could only see positive aspects to the clergy's political involvement. Elections tended to be less boisterous and returned less liberals. Racine suggested that if priests had been intemperate, it

⁴⁷ APFR, SC 1876 Bolduc à Roncetti, 1 juil. 1876.

⁴⁸ Ibid., SC 1876 Fabre, Racine, Duhamel et Moreau à Pie IX, 13 juil. 1876. Mémoire Bourget, 23 juin 1876. Racine à Franchi, 18 juil. 1876.

was surely in the Archdiocese of Quebec, where they scandalously affirmed that religion had nothing to do with politics and that Rome approved of the Liberal Party.

Bourget especially disputed Franchi's assertion that because Catholics were a minority in Ottawa, the clergy's political involvement became particularly dangerous. It was precisely for this reason, Bourget argued, that voters had to cast their ballot with forethought for men of independence and principle. How else could a minority be respected? Was not O'Connell a striking testimony to this? Bourget also cited the eloquent examples of Catholic parliamentary solidarity in England when the hierarchy was reestablished and in Ontario during separate schools question.

Il faut donc de toute nécessité travailler fortement à bien composer par de bonnes élections, cette minorité catholique, pour qu'étant forte et vraiment honorable, elle puisse faire respecter la religion et réclamer ses droits...⁴⁹

The bishops of Montreal and Sherbrooke criticized Franchi's method of dealing with the entire question. The Cardinal Prefect admitted accusations as fact without even inquiring whether contradictory evidence existed. Since the matter, moreover, involved the whole province, Bourget considered that Franchi should have submitted the incriminating material for the hierarchy's investigation, and not simply have incited Taschereau to stop clerical extremism.

The Archbishop was the target of particular denunciation.

49 APFR, SC 1876 Mémoire Bourget, 23 juin 1876.

His colleagues alleged that, intimidated by the liberals' violent reaction to the joint pastoral, Taschereau beat a hasty retreat, abandoning his suffragans to partisan fury. Racine maintained that self-seeking men manipulated the Metropolitan and abused of his authority. Nothing, however, equalled the bitterness of Bourget's criticism. He recited the Archbishop's sins since 1871: his deceitful role as papal investigator; his sponsorship of innumerable appeals against Bourget; his dishonorable pressures on government; his mendacious telegrams to Rome; his inertia on amending the civil code; his betrayal of the collective pastoral to please the Liberal Party. The bishop concluded that Taschereau neither had the wisdom, nor the discretion, nor even the independence to advise the Propaganda on this serious issue. Nor did the Metropolitan enjoy his colleagues' confidence. The hierarchy concurred by dispatching Laflèche to acquaint the Propaganda with the facts. They also begged the Pope to condemn Catholic liberalism in Canada.

Even before the episcopal delegates set foot on Roman soil, their opponents cautioned the Cardinals against them. Bolduc considered the bishop of Trois-Rivières very dangerous "...à cause de l'exaltation de son esprit et l'exagération des moyens dont il se sert pour arriver à son but."⁵⁰ Sax described the men behind the Nouveau Monde as ignorant,

50 APFR, SC 1876 Bolduc à Roncetti, 1 juil. 1876.

hypocritical, unscrupulous, and ambitious.⁵¹ Persico held Lamarche personally responsible for the passionately partisan atmosphere in Montreal. A man of little or no education, the Cathedral Canon sought by the subtlest artifices to avoid Rome's judgements. As for Tassé, he openly meddled in politics and was inconstant. In fact, before the provincial election, he had been an unmitigated enemy of Bourget and the Nouveau Monde.⁵²

The Propaganda sympathized entirely with Taschereau in this confrontation.⁵³ Harel and de Angelis therefore warned the envoys that if they intended to discredit the Archbishop their mission would fail. They should instead approach the Congregation as victims of aggression. This would allow them to explain the political situation in Quebec and establish that Franchi's admonition to the Quebec clergy was unjustified.⁵⁴

This tactic produced immediate results. Franchi assured the delegates, who wanted to refute the accusations brought against them, that no formal charges had been laid. According to Laflèche, the Prefect admitted having acted on press articles "passés et commentés par celui que l'on peu deviner sans être devin".⁵⁵ He apparently apologized for his letter to Taschereau, affirming that he had only intended

51 APFR, SC 1876 Sax à Franchi, 16 juin 1876.

52 Ibid., SC 1876 Persico a Franchi, 28 luglio 1876.

53 ACAM., RCD 46 Harel à Bourget, 11 août 1876.
901.147 Lamarche à Bourget, 8 oct. 1876

54 Ibid., RCD 46 Harel à Bourget, 11 août 1876.

55 ASTR, Laflèche à Caron, 16 sept. 1876.

to solicit information, not to accuse anyone.⁵⁶

When the envoys began to explain the political situation in Canada, however, they betrayed an ambiguous, if not partisan, spirit. Laflèche contended that the Liberal Party had a double personality: one, political; the other, religious. By assaulting Catholic principles and ecclesiastical interests, its leaders and its press trespassed into the religious realm. The clergy therefore had a sacred duty to combat the party "en signalant et flétrissant ses doctrines ou ses actes pervers."⁵⁷ Lamarche added that the aggressor should be pursued with that same moderation "... déployée par l'Eglise quand elle jugea à propos de proscrire les sectes protestantes et jansénistes."⁵⁸

Unfortunately, Laflèche argued, Catholic Liberals refused to recognize the party's glaring anti-clericalism. Some pushed their naive and misdirected idealism to the point of thinking that they were the Liberal Party. Yet, the facts spoke louder than these simple professions of faith. The parti national had been totally cowed. Its vanguard meekly accepted insignificant posts in the Liberal hierarchy, submitted to party discipline, and yielded to their natural leaders, liberals like the Huguenot Joly, Huntington, Cauchon,

56 ACAM, 901.147 Lamarche à Fabre, 13 août 1876.
295.104 Laflèche à Fabre, 11 sept. 1876.

57 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à Fabre, 29 août 1876.

58 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à Mongeau, 23 août 1876.

and Laflamme. The conclusion was obvious. Since the Liberal Party was anti-Catholic, Rome would have to watch over it very closely.⁵⁹

Laflèche and Lamarche also asked the Holy See to approve the joint pastoral explicitly. Oreglia and Agnozzi objected that, unless Rome publicly disavowed episcopal writings, it should be assumed that they were binding on the faithful. The delegates pleaded extenuating circumstances. The liberal press had shamelessly exploited Taschereau's letter of May 25. It was therefore imperative to rehabilitate the document.⁶⁰

Accordingly, Pius IX issued on September 18, 1876, a brief, which praised Laflèche's struggle against Catholic liberalism. This doctrine, the Pope affirmed, seduced honest men "particulièrement dans les questions qui, de prime abord, semblent plutôt se rapporter au gouvernement civil qu'à l'autorité ecclésiastique."⁶¹ However, Pius IX spoke with equal emphasis on the need for episcopal unity in Quebec and carefully avoided references to the joint pastoral. Laflèche interpreted the brief as a total victory and a complete exoneration of the provincial clergy.⁶² He and Tassé prepared to depart from Rome, leaving Lamarche behind to instruct the Propaganda further on the Liberal Party. The bishop of Trois-Rivières only regretted being unable to

59 ACAM, 901.147 Lamarche à H. Moreau, 13 sept. 1876.

60 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à J. Séguin, 11 sept. 1876.

61 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à Bourget, 19 sept. 1876.

62 Ibid., 295.104 Laflèche à Bourget, 20 sept. 1876.

get the Holy See to revoke Bourget's resignation which took effect in early September.

Emboldened by this success, Lamarche decided to speak more candidly on controversial matters with some Propaganda officials. He felt that he could not analyze the unrest in Quebec without referring to Taschereau. The moment was right. The Canon presented Agnozzi and Oreglia a modified version of Bourget's brief against his Metropolitan. Lamarche depicted the Archbishop as a man torn between his basic ultramontane instincts and his liberal entourage. All too often, the second influence won out. "Mgr. Taschereau n'est pas libéral, mais quelquefois il parle ou se tait comme s'il l'était."⁶³ Of all his ill-advised acts, the May 25 letter was the hardest to justify because, in its practical implications, it contradicted the joint pastoral.⁶⁴

The Cathedral Canon then exposed the duplicity of liberal Catholicism. In Rome, its adherents predicted that ultramontanism would unleash a bitter Protestant reaction. In Quebec, they deliberately twisted ecclesiastical teachings to whip up Orange fanaticism. In both instances, liberal Catholics sought to intimidate the Church, to keep it at bay, so as to dominate all facets of society. Yet, Lamarche assured the Cardinals that their prophecies

63 APFR, SC 1876 Mémoire Lamarche à Agnozzi, 26 oct. 1876.

64 ACAM, 901.147 Lamarche à Mongeau, 24 sept. 1876.

would come to naught.

Both constitutionally and socially, ecclesiastical rights were secure. In fact, since Confederation, Catholics constituted a majority in Quebec and had the power to create a political structure reflecting this reality. "Chaque Province forme en quelque sorte une famille politique à part, sous la protection de l'Angleterre, qui respecte son autonomie...."⁶⁵ Liberal Catholics raised the spectre of the federal veto to haunt the Propaganda. Yet, this device existed more in theory, than in practice. Federal members of parliament could present a motion of censure against any cabinet minister who vetoed provincial legislation, with the assurance that their colleagues, who were equally jealous of provincial rights, would support them.

The much-feared Protestant backlash was also largely mythical. Although English Canadians were politically divided, the majority, especially in Quebec, emulated the noble traditions of British conservatism. "... Ils ont l'instinct que vous connaissez au (sic) grands propriétaires d'Angleterre: les folies et les aventures des révolutions les tentent peu."⁶⁶ Huntington and Galt's hysterical attempts to whip up their people in a holy war fell flat. The former was repudiated by his colleagues in Ottawa. The latter lost all credibility among his electors in the Eastern Townships.

Instead, most Protestants supported the achievements of

65 APFR, SC 1877 Mémoire Lamarche, 15 janv. 1877.

66 ACAM, 901.147 Lamarche à Bourget, 11 oct. 1876.

ultramontanism. They endorsed de Boucherville's administration, offspring of the programme catholique, which introduced many ecclesiastical reforms. The Gazette, leading vehicle of Protestant opinion, refuted charges of undue clerical influence and denounced liberal attempts to provoke a sectarian war. Only a fanatical fringe responded to such appeals.⁶⁷ Only those interested in protecting liberal Catholics fabricated such phantasms as the federal veto and the Protestant backlash.

From principle, Lamarche turned to personalities, lighting into Joseph Cauchon and P. A. Tremblay. The Propaganda, he asserted, should reject the testimony of these deceitful men. Cauchon was totally unscrupulous and self-seeking. He publicly denied the Church's supremacy over the State and slandered renowned Catholic authors. His newspaper, the Journal de Québec, constantly berated the clergy, propounded gallican theories, and coarsely assaulted ultramontane principles.⁶⁸ Tremblay had lost the clergy's confidence by his servile support of Mackenzie's liberal policies on the amnesty, New Brunswick Schools, the transcontinental railway, and on government subsidies to Mennonite rather than French Canadian settlers.⁶⁹

Harel believed that Lamarche had to exert even greater efforts to overcome the atmosphere at the Propaganda where

67 APFR, SC 1877 Mémoire Lamarche, 15 janv. 1877.

68 Ibid., SC 1876 Mémoire confidentiel de Lamarche au Cardinal Oreglia, sans date.

69 ACAM, 901.147 Notes sur la politique de M. Tremblay.

petty interests dominated. Benjamin Pâquet had made many friends and easily influenced attitudes. The Cardinals did not seriously examine the documents submitted to them, preferring instead to listen to the opposition's idle gossip. "...Quand (sauront-ils) calculer la conséquence de leurs actes vis-à-vis la masse de la population de notre pays et de son Episcopat(?)." ⁷⁰ A few months later, Harel referred to the fear which seized the Propaganda in the wake of the episcopacy's stand on the Charlevoix case. ⁷¹ Would the papal legate fall victim to this contagion?

Meanwhile, in Montreal, a spirit of mistrust permeated the diocese, following Bourget's retirement. The Cathedral Chapter and the new bishop accused each other of secretiveness. ⁷² These suspicions were in fact well-founded. Lamarche sent a copy of his anti-Taschereau brief, not to Fabre, but to Bourget, who in turn showed it only to two Canons and to Laflèche. ⁷³ Indicative of the Chapter's lack of confidence in Fabre was Lamarche's attachment to Bourget: "Il y a dans le seul fait de sa présence parmi nous une force morale qui encourage et soutient les faibles...." ⁷⁴

The liberal question accentuated the distance between the bishop and his entourage. Fabre raised a storm by

70 ASTR, Harel à Laflèche, 11 janv. 1877.

71 Ibid., Harel à Laflèche, 4 avril 1877.

72 ACAM, RCD 47 P. Leblanc à Lamarche, 5 sept. 1876.
901.147 Lamarche à Fabre, 12 nov. 1876.

73 Ibid., RCD 47 P. Leblanc à Lamarche, 24 nov. 1876.

74 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à Leblanc, 2 nov. 1876.

granting absolution to a handful of Catholics who voted for Rodolphe Laflamme in the Jacques-Cartier byelection of December 1876. Local curés ardently objected. Good faith, they alleged, could not be invoked on behalf of these sinners who knowingly voted for an anticlerical. Fabre's actions, they added, seemed to betray his liberal inclinations and utterly demoralized them.⁷⁵

In reply, the bishop indicated that liberalism contaminated both political parties, although "... ceux qui sont libéraux et se disent tels, s'ils n'ont pas tous de mauvaises intentions, ... paraissent au moins plus suspects."⁷⁶ He therefore distinguished liberalism from the Liberal Party and suggested that a Catholic could, in all honesty, vote for a political organization not formally condemned by the Church. Above all, a confessor had to take into consideration the penitent's conscience. In the spirit of Christian charity, he had to differentiate the leper from leprosy. It was unwise to deprive a parishioner of the sacraments for supporting a specific party.

Fabre embittered feelings even more when he reprimanded Lamarche for being obsessed in Rome with purely political questions. The pontifical brief, he believed, adequately dealt with the liberal question. But Lamarche insisted on undertaking a full-scale justification of the Nouveau Monde,

75 APFR, SC 1877B Curés du comté de Jacques-Cartier à Fabre, 5 déc. 1876. SC 1877A Curés du comté de Jacques-Cartier à Fabre, 15 déc. 1876.

76 ACAM, RLB 25 Fabre à F. Bourgeault et autres, 9 déc. 1876.

which aroused age-old antagonisms and threatened the newly-found episcopal solidarity. Fabre pressed the Canon to spend his time on other more important diocesan matters.⁷⁷

Lamarche interpreted Fabre's message of restraint as backsliding. He assured the bishop that his interests were completely non-partisan, dedicated exclusively to the programme catholique.

Il ne s'agit point de défendre ici le Nouveau Monde ... mais ... (les) vrais principes catholiques et Romains. Si les libéraux les attaquent, c'est partout un devoir de les combattre; si les Conservateurs les trahissent, ils se rendent coupables d'une double faute et les chemins de fer n'y peuvent rien.⁷⁸

Harel wanted Bourget and Laflèche to infuse strength into Fabre so that he could encourage Lamarche in his mission. The young theology student himself tried to shore up the bishop's apparently flagging resolution. He sent Fabre wordy epistles urging him to stand firm against Catholic liberals, "ces traitres à la patrie et à la religion".⁷⁹

Even Bourget abandoned the self-imposed silence of retirement to tell Fabre bluntly that his administration did not inspire confidence. Fabre cautioned the old Archbishop against believing the idle rumors of zealots: "Ma famille est libérale (,) dans leur opinion il faut que je le sois, et parce que je n'ai pas admiré les imprudences de certains curés il faut absolument que j'aie tort...."⁸⁰ To Harel,

77 ACAM, RLB 25 Fabre à Lamarche, 5 déc. 1876.

78 Ibid., 901.147 Lamarche à Fabre, 28 janv. 1877.

79 Ibid., RCD 46 Harel à Fabre, 1 fév. 1877. Harel à Fabre, 17 fév. 1877.

80 Ibid., 902.001 Fabre à Bourget, 18 juil. 1877.

Fabre made a ringing confession of ultramontaniam.

Au séminaire, j'étais un ardent ultramontain sans même savoir alors toute la portée de ce rôle. La question des classiques ne faisaient qu'apparaître et par instinct plutôt que par étude je me trouvais avec les chrétiens. J'étais le plus ardent contradicteur des usages de S. Sulpice et des rites français. 81

He had been preoccupied with dismemberment since 1846. Was it any wonder that his was not the zeal of a recent convert?

* * *

The difference between the two bishops of Montreal was as much one of manner as of substance. A man of immense energy, vitality, and warmth, Bourget exercised charisma over his clergy. As their petitions against his resignation stated, they considered him a man of providence, a father, a saint, the living image of Pius IX. Bourget responded with an unbounded confidence in his parish priests, especially in the Cathedral Canons and the Roman envoys.

The relationship, based largely on intuition and common feelings, rather than intellect and rationality, had definite drawbacks. Bourgettisme was a way of being, not a coherent and defined set of beliefs. Even the bishop's close associates exceeded his thoughts on various controversial questions. He judged them by their intentions rather than the effects of their actions. A glaring example of this was the Comédie Infernale incident. Bourget's opponents capitalized on this weakness by holding him responsible

81 ACAM, RCD 45 Fabre à Harel, 29 mars, 1877.

for the excesses of his disciples. His apparent reluctance to call them to order gave substance to these charges. The tendency was particularly dangerous, though, when nebulous and easily exploitable issues like Catholic liberalism were involved. It proved to be his downfall.

Bourget was a difficult man to succeed. Fabre had none of his charismatic qualities. Cool and reserved, he tended to isolate himself from the other Canons at first because of his family's questionable political connections, but then because of his episcopal position. He could not be the man of providence since one already existed in the diocese of Montreal. He could not be a father figure since half the Cathedral Canons and most vicars-forane were older than he. These deficiencies were real liabilities. Most diocesan priests in fact resented his succeeding Bourget, as Hypolite Moreau's letter intimated. They would very likely find fault with whatever course Fabre chose to pursue.

Yet, Bourget and Fabre seemed to follow identical policies. Their condemnation of Catholic liberalism was directed against members of both political parties, although they considered Liberals more suspect than Conservatives. They upheld the clergy's right to intervene in politics when religious questions were at stake, but enjoined priests to speak of principles, not personalities. They especially warned confessors not to use absolution for partisan purposes, alerting them to the danger of creating false consciences. Both bishops emphasized that Catholics were guilty of sin only

if they knowingly supported professed anticlerical politicians or read their newspapers.

Nevertheless, Bourget and Fabre differed in one fundamental respect. Bourget's whole political perspective was centered on the individual. He held the politician personally responsible for government policy. Similarly, he instructed the faithful to elect the most committed Catholics, regardless of party affiliation. This explains why he considered that only anticlerics could back anticlerical candidates. Fabre's political perspective was party-oriented. He tolerated Catholics supporting an anticlerical politician, provided that they were voting for the party, not the man.

To Bourget and his disciples, this outlook was patently absurd because it created an artificial distinction between the party and the politician. In their view, the one was merely the sum of the other. Moreover, this conception failed to hold the party accountable for its choice of candidates and made the individual legislator a pawn of the party machine. The notion of moral responsibility, they argued, was completely removed from the political context. This is why Laflèche and Lamarche spent so much time denigrating the Liberal Party. They wanted to show that a party was responsible for the actions of individual members and that consequently Catholics could not simply vote for it without reference to the local candidate. Fabre's perspective, they believed, would merely serve partisan interests.

These distinctions were subtle and all too often unarticulated. It is little wonder that Catholic liberalism

became embroiled in partisanship. But, by choosing to emphasize this aspect exclusively, the Archdiocese of Quebec itself served the interests of the federal party in power. Benjamin Pâquet and his associates turned a blind eye to the basic doctrinal dimension of the question. Yet, some Liberal politicians with an explicit anti-clerical background still maintained an ambivalent attitude to the Church. This schizophrenic position certainly did not warrant Sax and Bolduc's apologies for the entire Liberal Party, nor their melodramatic images of the lily-white Liberal lamb led to the slaughter by a blood-thirsty clergy. Theirs were examples of overt and conscious, if not naive, partisanship.

During the Charlevoix byelection, Taschereau promoted partisan interests more subtly and less knowingly. He certainly had the power to check clerical excesses effectively. Yet, he apparently spared the local clergy and the bishop of Rimouski those trenchant didactic reprimands to which Bourget was so often subjected and ignored Tremblay's pressing pleas for an ecclesiastical tribunal. Instead, he chose a public medium which would bring the clergy into line but also absolve Liberals of clerical censure: the May 25th mandement. Subjectively, Taschereau was responding to his basic instinct to preserve good relations with those in authority. Objectively, however, the Metropolitan served the Liberal Party. That Liberal newspapers used the letter to destroy the joint pastoral illustrates this point.

By focusing on the partisan character of Catholic liberalism, the Archdiocese of Quebec unwittingly worked against the French Canadian nationalism. Louis Pâquet attributed the Protestant backlash to clerical excesses and, in a sense, justified it. He evoked the contrasting image of the upright progressive Protestant, staunch defender of civil liberty, and the corruptible, ignorant, submissive French Canadian, a recurrent theme in anti-nationalist literature. Only "nos imprudences", "nos fautes" could antagonize this paragon of civic virtue. Harmony would reign when parish priests returned to their senses.

Pâquet must have been aware, however, that an aggressive Anglo-Saxon nationalism existed since the 1850's and that its uglier manifestations, the Red River Rebellion and New Brunswick Schools, predated the joint pastoral. In fact, clerical intervention in politics was but a pretext for, not a cause of, Protestant backlash. Galt's pamphlets and Lindsey's Rome in Canada revealed how cleverly ecclesiastical writings could be manipulated to enflame deep-rooted Orange prejudices. An assertive Anglo-Saxon nationalism was a fact of life in the Canada of the national policy.

Benjamin Pâquet and his colleagues sought not so much to prevent the clergy's political involvement as to reestablish the bipartisanship which the Church lost with the programme catholique and the joint pastoral. This goal meant destroying Bourget's ideal of an independent Church and Catholic press and undermining the defensive French Canadian

nationalism associated with it. The bishop of Montreal and the Nouveau Monde had been the most outspoken critics of those in authority on religious and "national" issues. Now, the politicians would resolve these thorny problems alone in a spirit of "compromise". But, the forces within Canadian society were unevenly balanced. English Canadian nationalism was vigorous and assertive. Its French Canadian counterpart was in a state of shock from the heavy blow dealt by Rome.

CHAPTER XI

THE SHATTERED DREAM OF AN INDEPENDENT CHURCH

George Conroy came to Canada not to investigate the cause of unrest within the Quebec Church, but to impose a settlement largely elaborated in Rome. Officials at the Holy See feared that Taschereau's suffragans were triggering a constitutional and religious confrontation in Canada which, in the interests of Catholicism, they absolutely wanted to avoid. With his consummate Italian diplomacy, Conroy persuaded the bishops to align themselves with their Metropolitan. Those who expected an impartial and thorough inquiry were disillusioned and alienated.

Conroy spent his most productive energies on the political question which Rome urgently wanted resolved. It is not so much at the doctrinal level that one can discern his achievements. The joint pastoral of October 1877 simply repeated tenets contained in previous episcopal pronouncements, only with greater clarity and concision. It is rather in his own perceptions, attitudes, and intentions. He approached the political question from a pan-Canadian and party-centered stand-point. As such, the anticlerical wing of the Liberal Party appeared to be diffuse and rather innocuous. He therefore judged the Quebec clergy severely for needlessly antagonizing the governing party and blamed Bourget for initiating this reckless conduct. The

apostolic delegate resolved to placate the Liberals by making the 1875 joint pastoral inoperative.

Conroy's conflict with Bourget's disciples occurred on this unspoken plane. Because theirs was a Quebec-centered perspective, the Rouge component seemed preponderant within the Liberal caucus. Absolving the party was out of the question until this element was repudiated.

The apostolic delegate's position on the university and on dismemberment merely confirmed their feeling that the greatest accomplishments of Bourget's administration were being discarded.

Conroy's mission attained key Roman objectives. Taschereau emerged considerably strengthened vis-à-vis his suffragans, confident of the Holy See's fullest support. The Liberal Party was rehabilitated. Its leaders knew that neither Rome nor the local Church would shield priests accused of undue electoral influence. However, when Conroy boasted of having resolved the outstanding ecclesiastical controversies in Quebec, he was fantasizing. His consensus was but an illusion, resting on compulsion and artifice. He segregated Bourget's disciples because they did not fit into the scheme of things. He manipulated recalcitrant bishops with an iron fist in a velvet glove. Signs of unrest were already apparent soon after his arrival. When he left, the consensus collapsed. The crisis within the Quebec Church resulting from Bourget's resignation continued. Conroy failed to deal with its root causes, with fundamental

issues of Church-State relations which Bourget had raised in the latter years of office.

* * *

Lamarche announced the Conroy* mission as a coup for Bourget. Apparently, during the general congregation which decided on the appointment, a prominent prelate exposed the Propaganda's recurrent ignorance of the facts. It seemed inconceivable to the official that on all contentious issues the Archbishop of Quebec should constantly be right. He urged that the Congregation do a thorough on-the-spot investigation.¹

Conroy encouraged the impression that his was to be an exhaustive, impartial fact-finding mission. In Rome, he invited Lamarche to speak freely about all controversial issues. In Quebec he assured Laflèche, "I am quite resolved not to leave Canada until I shall have thoroughly and fully examined the question under discussion, and my house shall be open to all who desire to see me."²

This openness was more apparent than real. The papal legate left Rome with secret instructions from the Holy

* GEORGE CONROY (1833-1878) nephew of Michael Kieran, Primate of Ireland; studied at Armagh Diocesan College, 1848-1850; at the College of the Propaganda, 1850-1857; professor of theology at All Hallows College, Dublin, 1857-1866; co-editor of the Irish Ecclesiastical Record; secretary to Cardinal Paul Cullen, Primate of Ireland; Bishop of Ardagh, 1871-1878.

1 ACAM, Lamarche à Bourget, Fabre et Laflèche, 1 fév. 1877.

2 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, July 18, 1877.

See.³ He was evidently asked to evaluate whether the 1875 joint pastoral could be retracted. If this proved unfeasible, he would prompt the bishops to issue a new letter, exonerating the Liberal Party and asserting the individual's right to vote according to his conscience. Conroy hoped that his directives would appeal to the governing party.⁴ On arriving in Canada, though, he was forced to fight a rearguard action "... (Ho) impedito una formale condanna del Partito politico dalla parte dei Vescovi, i quali avevano già raccolti (sic) i documenti per appoggiare tale condanna."⁵ Consequently, he waited for a more suitable opportunity to implement his instructions.

Bourget inadvertently provided it three months later. Outraged by continued attempts to muzzle the clergy, he circulated a petition among diocesan priests, which bore his unmistakable non-partisan imprint.⁶ The document asserted that the clergy intervened in politics not to favor a particular political party. They had in fact been open to the parti national, composed of Catholics and moderate liberals. Rather, their actions were motivated by doctrine and deeply

3 Franchi's letter to Conroy of Nov. 14 1877, cited in R. Rumilly, Mgr Laflèche et son Temps. Editions du Zodiaque, (Montréal, 1938) 118-9, did not contain the full instructions as an earlier Conroy letter, APFR, SC 1877D Conroy a Franchi, 12 ott. 1877 suggests.

4 APFR, SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 18 sett. 1877.

5 Ibid., SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 9 giugno 1877.
"... I prevented the bishops from formally condemning the political party (Liberals). They had already collected the documents to support this condemnation."

6 ASSH, Bourget à Lamarche, 20 août 1877.

rooted in tradition. "... Ils auraient cru manquer à leur devoir le plus sacré envers le peuple canadien qui a toujours reposé dans le clergé la plus entière confiance... s'ils ne lui avaient pas appris à repousser (les) ennemis de la religion catholique et de sa nationalité..."⁷ In view of divisions within the Quebec Church, however, the clergy asked Pius IX to make a clear doctrinal statement on Catholic liberalism.

Conroy exploited this petition as well as Rodrigue Masson's complaint that some priests were abusing the Conservative Party to force the issue. On this, as on other sensitive occasions, the apostolic delegate brought about consensus within the hierarchy by working through Laflèche, the most recalcitrant prelate, yet the most submissive to Rome's will. "It is plain that some statement from authority is absolutely necessary", he told the bishop of Trois-Rivières. "I hope you will prepare something that will be in harmony with my instructions."⁸ But, Laflèche had not the slightest idea what these directives were. Indeed, shortly before the episcopal meeting in Quebec City, he sent Lamarche a brief which again underlined the Liberal Party's subversive traits.

Conroy encouraged Bourget's disciples to have high hopes in the bishops' conference. He quieted any fears that they might have about his own intentions. To Lamarche, he

7 APFR, SC 1877C Procès verbal de l'Assemblée des curés du diocèse de Montréal, 27 août 1877.

8 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Sept. 21, 1877.

professed himself a conservative, deplored the liberals' manipulation of religion for electoral purposes, and believed that every effort should be made to remove them from public life. He promised that the hierarchy would do nothing to justify or support them. Lamarche anticipated that the episcopacy, led by Laflèche, would ask Rome to approve a declaration of clerical immunity.⁹

The papal legate, however, confided his innermost thoughts about the political question to Franchi. He reported that Quebec was the only province where politics had strong religious overtones. While public opinion was evenly divided between the two parties, the episcopacy, except perhaps Taschereau, two-thirds of the clergy, and the most devoted Catholic laymen supported the Conservatives. The disequilibrium was aggravated by the fervor of Conservative sentiment which in many attained irrational proportions. Several elements went to explain this effervescence, not the least of which was self-interest. Mgr. Bourget, for example, wanted to punish the Liberals for supporting the Sulpicians. Many ecclesiastics had close relatives in politics. Whatever the explanations, however, partisan zeal posed serious problems to Canadian Catholicism.

Conroy believed that it was these intemperate Catholics, not the anticlericals, who complicated his mission. Parish priests were so frenzied with political passion that they failed to understand the true meaning of Catholic teachings.

⁹ ASTR, Lamarche à Laflèche, 5 oct. 1877.

The ultramontanes, given to exaggeration, suspicion, and pessimism, prayed for the advent of an apocalyptic confrontation with liberalism, failing which, they feared, Catholicism would be destroyed. They had little confidence in the Holy See, claiming that it had betrayed ecclesiastical freedom in Canada. They regarded Quebec City as the citadel of liberalism and heresy.

The papal legate admitted that, from its very inception, the Quebec wing of the Liberal Party was free-thinking, in fact that it attracted all those who despised Catholicism. Its leaders also slighted nationalist sensibilities by advocating annexation with the United States. Unfortunately, the clergy associated the whole party with this faction and began an anti-Liberal crusade.¹⁰

Clerical partisanship, Conroy affirmed, bordered on fanaticism in the diocese of Montreal. The petition to Pius IX proved it. Bourget still held an unbridled sway over parish priests.¹¹ It was he who ordered pastors in Jacques Cartier riding to withhold absolution from those supporting the Quebec leader of the Liberal Party in 1876. Conroy admitted that Laflamme did not deserve Catholic votes, but Bourget's prescription contravened moral theology. Almost one year had elapsed since the byelection and the county clergy still refused to absolve Laflamme's backers.

10 APFR, SC 1877 Rapporto di Mgr. Conroy sull'opinione pubblica nel Canada, (rough draft) undated.

11 Ibid., SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 7 sett. 1877.

They even had the temerity to ask Fabre to explain himself when he confessed these Liberals.¹² The Irish prelate pledged to stop these abuses which he claimed to be commonplace in Montreal. He hoped that the bishops would spontaneously adopt his instructions at their forthcoming conference.¹³ However, the older clergy was so overwrought that he asked for Franchi's written support.

Shortly thereafter, Conroy announced that the episcopal meeting was a complete success. Taschereau and Laflèche together drafted the joint pastoral which repeated verbatim key sentences from his Roman directives. The bishops also drew up a circular explicitly forbidding the clergy to turn away Liberal supporters from the confessional.¹⁴

Following the meeting, the papal legate steered a tricky course. He had to soothe ultramontane scruples about the timeliness of the letter, while preventing Catholic newspapers from reawakening scarcely dormant polemics on Catholic liberalism. Conroy assured the bishop of Trois-Rivières that the Conservatives "except a few extreme and impractical men" reacted favorably to the new pastoral, glad to be relieved of the "imprudent zeal" of some clerics. The Liberals, on the other hand, were hardly enthusiastic about retention of the 1875 letter.¹⁵ To calm ultramontane

12 APFR, SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 28 sett. 1877.

13 Ibid., SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 18 sett. 1877.

14 Ibid., SC 1877D Conroy a Franchi, 12 ott. 1877.

15 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Oct. 22, 1877.

consciences even more, the Irish prelate wanted to announce publicly that the hierarchy had agreed on guidelines which firmly upheld Church liberties in Canada and governed relations between ecclesiastical and civil courts.¹⁶ Taschereau, however, opposed this initiative because it suggested that Church rights were indeed in jeopardy. It would provoke new and heated polemics. He believed that the initial furore caused by the joint pastoral would simply die down on its own.¹⁷

Conroy then advised Laflèche and Lamarche to publish clear explanations of the letter in their newspapers, ostensibly to prevent the Liberals from claiming it as a victory. The message of these articles, however, betrayed the legate's real intentions. They were to repeat, he insisted, that the pastoral enunciated doctrine and as such did not apply to parties or politicians.¹⁸

The interpretation subsequently appearing in the Journal des Trois Rivières, probably written by Luc Désilets, displeased Conroy. "... I miss ... the calm and moderate tone which I so much admired in your Lordship's exposition of your opinion, especially on ... our return journey from Quebec."¹⁹ He deplored the writer's insubordination, his disrespect for the Holy See, his pretention to judge what was sinful in politics. "Why drag Pius IX and the Apostolic

16 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Oct. 20, 1877.

17 APFR, SC 1877C Taschereau à Conroy, 22 oct. 1877.

18 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Oct. 20, 1877.

19 Ibid., Conroy to Laflèche, Oct. 24, 1877.

Chair into miserable election squabbles."²⁰ Laflèche concurred, but Conroy was determined to suppress any explanation which exceeded the literal meaning of the letter and demanded a retraction. Meanwhile, Taschereau reported that Quebec City newspapers published the joint pastoral in full without comment.²¹

The letter clinched the opposition to Conroy. He identified its leaders as Bourget's intimates. These extremists visited the old Archbishop often and branded those discarding his ways as rotten liberals.²² Harel, whose opinions seemed to shift with the prevailing wind, confirmed this observation. Despair and self-pity, he noted, overwhelmed the episcopal palace. Cathedral Canons, fixed in their nostalgia for the man of the past, regarded the slightest criticism of his administration or his ideas as a crime of lèse-majesté.

The joint pastoral literally floored them. They believed that it wiped out the old order in one brutal stroke. It emasculated them. They felt that its unreasonable constraints impeded them from attaining their just and righteous objectives. "Ils croient que désormais ils ont les mains liées, que tout s'en va vers la ruine, que la lutte contre les idées fausses leur est défendue...." Devastated, some awaited the enemy's final blow with total resignation, while others decried the bishops' betrayal and longed for a

20 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Oct. 30, 1877.

21 APFR, SC 1877C Taschereau à Conroy, 20 oct. 1877.

22 Ibid., SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 20 ott. 1877.

spectacular revenge from Rome. However, they all lacked the courage of their convictions. Harel noted that, instead of making their views known to ecclesiastical authorities, "(ils gémissent) dans le secret et dans l'ombre."²³

The young theologian could not understand his colleagues' anxiety and alienation. Was not the episcopal letter solely designed to eliminate the clergy's excesses, which Bourget certainly condoned, if not instigated? Did it not reaffirm the Church's implacable opposition to Catholic liberalism? Since this doctrine contaminated both political parties, it would be sheer folly to align the Church behind the Conservatives. Still, nothing prevented the clergy from keeping closer watch over the Liberals, who were more suspect. Parish priests would continue to warn the faithful against their subversive and immoral tenets. Antonin Braun fully agreed with Harel. He believed that the joint pastoral also explicitly repudiated Taschereau's mandement by allowing parish priests to offer their private opinions on electoral matters, when solicited by their parishioners.²⁴ The Cathedral Canons, Harel remarked, rejected these opinions as absurd, if not blasphemous. They would have nothing to do with reality, nor with those who, like Fabre, collaborated with the new order.

23 ACAM, RCD 46 Journal Harel, 23 oct. 1877.

24 Ibid., RCD 46 Journal Harel, 30 oct. 1877.

Agitation against Conroy certainly had partisan traits. Yet, there was also a deeper dimension, which Laflèche clearly perceived. "... Ce n'est pas la Pastorale du 11 octobre qui produit par elle-même ce malaise général. Ce sont certains faits qui en ont paru à plusieurs comme le commentaire indirect mais réel...."²⁵

Conroy's opponents blamed him for vindicating Franchi's strictures against the Quebec clergy without even instituting a proper inquiry. Instead, he paraded about the province, giving vent to his preconceived ideas and thus obliterated the achievements of Laflèche's Roman mission.²⁶ The legate accused Bourget of misleading his clergy in political matters. In so doing, he discredited "la sagesse et l'autorité d'un des Evêques les plus vénérables et vénérés qu'ait jamais eu le Canada."²⁷ At Notre Dame, he warned the faithful both against Catholic liberals and those who in their over-zealousness applied dogma to individuals or political parties, thereby placing the Church's friends and its sworn enemies on the same footing.²⁸

Conroy, they alleged, was abetting Pâquet and Taschereau who sought to prove that Catholic liberalism did not exist in Canada. He believed the liberals' hypocritical professions

25 ASTR, Laflèche à Conroy, 30 déc. 1877.

26 Ibid., Laflèche à Conroy, 30 déc. 1877. Laflèche here quotes to Conroy a large portion of Tassé's letter, without disclosing the name of its author.

27 ACAM, 730.002 Désautels à Fabre, 24 nov. 1877.

28 ASSM, Projet de mémoire à la Propagande au nom de la majeure partie du clergé du Bas-Canada, 19 mars 1878.

of faith and submission to the Holy See.²⁹ By covering up their guilt, he facilitated their unwarranted rehabilitation at Laval. By excluding genuinely committed Catholic academics, he gave the liberals a privileged position at the annex in Montreal. During various by-elections, he ignored complaints about their continued perversion of religion. Worse still, the Irish prelate fostered a spirit of indifference by intimating that all politicians and parties were worthy of support.³⁰

Finally, the apostolic delegate was chastized for refusing to acknowledge Quebec's special status as "...le boulevard du catholicisme dans la confédération...."³¹ Only in Quebec were Catholic rights enshrined in constitutional documents. The fanatical instructions of British ministers had not prevailed against the invincible power of law. Now, Catholic and Protestant alike recognized these rights and the Anglo-Saxon majority generally respected them. The peril did not come from "foreigners", but from indigenous Catholic liberals dedicated to subverting the constituted order.

During Conroy's extended visit to the United States in 1878, Stanislas Tassé led a conspiracy to have the legate's mandate revoked. Two factors, however, compromised his

29 Archives de l'Evêché de Trois-Rivières (AETR) Registre VI Laflèche à Conroy, 1 fév. 1878.

30 ASTR, Laflèche à Conroy, 30 déc. 1877.

31 ASSM, Projet de mémoire, 19 mars 1878.

leadership: excessive partisanship which drove him to exclude seven families from his parish for supporting the Liberal Party;³² an inconstant spirit to which Persico earlier referred. Bourget and Laflèche remained aloof of the movement. Active support came from politicians Rodrigue Masson and L. O. Taillon as well as from some parish priests in Montreal and in the diocese of Trois-Rivières.³³ The pastor of Ste-Scholastique prepared a brief outlining their grievances, apparently with Mgr. Langevin's help. In the late spring, the final draft circulated around the province for the clergy's support.³⁴

Conroy resolved to isolate the opposition. The task, he confided to Franchi, was awesome considering the extent of clerical partisanship and Bourget's undiminished influence. "...Quel venerabile Prelato è almeno consapevole di tutto ciò che si fa contro la Pastorale, e la sua influenza sul clero ... è una delle più gravi difficoltà della posizione."³⁵

He blocked off the dissidents' every avenue of redress. Turning to Rome, he begged Franchi to repel any appeals from these "troppo ardenti sacerdoti".³⁶ He then used Franchi's

32 APFR, SC 1878 Conroy a Simeoni, 22 maggio 1878.

33 Ibid, SC 1877B H. A. Verreau à Conroy, 2 mars 1878.
ACAM, 421.088 Lavallée à Fabre, 3 avr. 1878.

34 APFR, SC 1878 Conroy a Simeoni, 22 maggio 1878.

35 Ibid., SC 1878 Conroy a Franchi, 29 gennaio 1878.
"The venerable prelate is at least aware of all that is being done against the pastoral. His influence over the clergy is one of the most difficult problems in this question."

36 Ibid., SC 1878 Conroy a Franchi, 18 febbraio 1878.

letter of November 1877, which transmitted the Holy Office's political instructions and again indicted the clergy for partisanship, to maintain episcopal unity. This was particularly important because the Irish prelate refused to deal directly with his opponents. For example, he had Bourget and Laflèche warn them that any public display of opposition would be met with canonical censures.³⁷ Conroy, of course, wanted to stop all agitation, private or public. He urged Fabre to use the power and influence of his office to impede Tassé's intrigues and apparently intimated that he exploit the curé's most obvious weakness, his partisan behavior toward his parishioners, to achieve this end.³⁸

The papal legate especially worked on the weakest link in the episcopal mail. He wanted above all to prevent Laflèche, who acted as Conroy's contact with the dissidents, from defecting. He bolstered the bishop's determination by appealing to his sense of unity, order, and peace. The joint pastoral, he insisted, delineated a sensible policy for the Quebec Church and also agreed with ecclesiastical doctrines and the Holy See's directives. Unfortunately, the provincial lower clergy had the lamentable habit of challenging episcopal acts.³⁹ When this took the form of appeals to Rome, Conroy had no objections; when it caused

37 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Jan. 2, 1878.
ACAM, 211.003 Conroy to Fabre, Jan. 27, 1878.
APFR, SC 1878 Conroy a Franchi, 29 gennaio 1878.

38 ACAM, 211.003 Conroy to Fabre, Feb. 19, 1878.

39 AETR, Laflèche à Conroy, 2 fév. 1878.

scandalous newspaper debates, it had to be suppressed ruthlessly.

The Montreal clergy, he continued, not only displayed traditional insubordination, but bad faith. After specifically requesting instruction from the Church, they refused to follow the joint pastoral, thus "... fully (justifying) the accusations made against them by those they dislike so much."⁴⁰ How could they expect parishioners to follow their own political directives? Conroy predicted that these conspiracies would irreparably harm the Conservative Party.⁴¹ He warned Laflèche to avoid any action which the opposition might manipulate to claim him as their own.⁴²

While discrediting his antagonists, the Irish bishop emphasized his own openness and magnanimity. He invited disgruntled clerics to discuss their grievances with him. Perhaps, he suggested, their uneasiness stemmed from statements which the press misunderstood or misinterpreted. He even offered to withdraw any unfounded assertions.

This campaign to influence Laflèche was fully effective. The bishop of Trois-Rivières affirmed that he would have nothing to do with the opposition.⁴³ He encouraged Tassé to take full advantage of the legate's overture and advised

40 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Jan. 2, 1878.

41 Ibid., Conroy to Laflèche, Feb. 28, 1878.

42 Ibid., Conroy to Laflèche, Jan. 2, 1878.

43 AETR., Laflèche à Conroy, 1 fév. 1878.

him to inform Fabre and Conroy, if he persisted in appealing to Rome.⁴⁴

The 1878 provincial election put the legate's achievements to the test. Laflèche was convinced that the Letellier coup foreshadowed the revolution. The liberals, he noted, were again abusing religion on the hustings and covering themselves with Conroy's authority. He therefore begged the Irish prelate to allow him to publish excerpts of the 1875 pastoral.⁴⁵ From San Francisco, Conroy replied:

I consider that such a publication would be injurious to Religion in Canada, and in direct opposition with the instructions given to me and to the bishops of Canada by the Holy See.... Let political parties fight over letters, and let the dead bury the dead.⁴⁶

After the election, Conroy informed Rome that the joint pastoral had stood the test. The clergy generally respected episcopal guidelines during the campaign. The few notable exceptions would be prosecuted, but he doubted whether the prevailing peace would be disturbed. He also reported that Tassé's petition seemed doomed to failure.⁴⁷

For Laflèche and Langevin especially, the joint pastoral did not resolve the question of undue clerical influence. They wanted the legislature to declare the clergy immune

44 AETR, Laflèche à Tassé, 15 fév. 1878.

45 Ibid., Laflèche à Conroy, 22 mars 1878.

46 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Apr. 2, 1878.

47 APFR, SC 1878 Conroy a Simeoni, 22 maggio 1878.

from civil prosecution in cases involving pastoral functions. This issue permitted Conroy to give the bishops directives concerning their dealings with civil authority. He suggested that the hierarchy confidentially ask the premier whether the government could introduce such legislation without risking defeat. "I hope that (the bishops) would not make a few M.P.'s their accredited agents in this matter."⁴⁸ They should then assess whether the federal and British governments would tolerate the measure. How would Quebec Protestants react to it? Conroy suggested that they might demand similar legislation, thus creating chaos. Otherwise, they would surely cry out against theocratic rule. What of Catholics outside Quebec? They had often complained that Catholic militancy in the province had provoked Orange persecution. Would the bishops not be wise to consult their colleagues in other parts of Canada? On this and other such issues, Conroy urged utmost prudence to avoid arousing Protestant passions.

With the political question settled to his satisfaction, the papal legate turned to the university problem which had stagnated for over a year. Conroy was instructed to implement all the provisions of the 1876 decree. The task was fairly basic at first. He persuaded three recalcitrant bishops, Fabre, Laflèche, and Moreau to publish the bull Inter varias sollicitudines for their dioceses.⁴⁹ This allowed him to

⁴⁸ ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Feb. 19, 1878.

⁴⁹ APFR, SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 8 agosto 1877.

establish the higher episcopal council. His next assignment, reconciling the hierarchy to certain suspect professors, was also quite easy. The Irish prelate instructed Langelier to confess to the bishops that he would have never defended Pitre Tremblay, if he had foreseen the scandal resulting from the Charlevoix trial. The professor complied and the hierarchy was appeased.⁵⁰ As for Judge L.-N. Casault, his case was settled in Rome. It was unthinkable to the Propaganda that he should be deprived of his chair at Laval for invalidating the election in the provincial riding of Bonaventure. Never in the British Dominions had there been the slightest incompatibility between judicial office and allegiance to Catholicism. Casault had to be free to fulfill his functions according to British law.⁵¹ The bishops accepted this order.

Conroy then left for Montreal where he supervised the organization of Laval's annex. Setting up the law faculty presented no major difficulty. It merely involved harmonizing partisan interests. H. A. Verreau consulted with Chapleau and Arthur Dansereau, editor of La Minerve, on possible appointments. He then transmitted their recommendations to Conroy. The Irish prelate agreed with their basic request that Bourget's followers be excluded from the faculty. He considered the leading ultramontane laymen to be frauds, unworthy of the Church's confidence.⁵² Chapleau

50 APFR, SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 12 ott. 1877.

51 Ibid., SC 1877D Franchi a Conroy, 26 gennaio 1878.

52 Ibid., SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 28 sett. 1878.

and Dansereau demanded a predominantly Conservative law school, with one or two Liberals like Jetté on staff. Chapleau himself aspired to a chair. They rejected Amable Berthelot as faculty dean because of his temperamental disposition, but had no objections to Cherrier.⁵³ Conroy executed their wishes.

The medical annex was not quite as easy to establish. Laval and the Ecole de Médecine stubbornly stood by their old positions. Drs. P. A. C. Munro and Peltier refused to have their institution become a mere extension of Laval, while Hamel freely contemplated constituting a faculty outside the Ecole with Dr. J. P. Rottot as dean.⁵⁴ Conroy brought Munro and Peltier quickly to heel. He disclosed to them the tenor of the 1876 pontifical decree of which they had been totally ignorant. Negotiations then started in earnest with Hamel. The Ecole required that Laval recognize its corporate character and respect its academic standards. By mid-November, the parties reached a compromise. The episcopal corporation would manage the Ecole's real estate; Laval would name a nucleus of three professors from the school who together with the bishop of Montreal would make recommendations on the other faculty appointments; the Ecole was granted two years to bring its academic norms in line with those of Laval.⁵⁵

53 APFR, SC 1877C Verreau à Conroy, 24 sept. 1877.

54 Ibid., SC 1877C Hamel à Conroy, sans date (c. fin oct. 1877)

55 ACAM, 820.001 Conditions agréées par le Conseil universitaire de Laval et L'Ecole de Médecine, nov. 1877.

Conroy was jubilant. He informed Laflèche that the university controversy was resolved "on terms satisfactory to Montreal".⁵⁶ A few days later, he boasted about the new establishment to Franchi. The Sulpicians, he announced, agreed to take charge of the theological faculty. The professors of law included some of the most distinguished men in Canada, drawn from both political parties. The Ecole de Médecine in theory would become the medical annex, however, a few contentious points still had to be settled. Three of its doctors were suspect: Eméry Coderre belonged to the Institut Canadien; A. T. Brosseau was a freethinker; the third, a notorious alcoholic. If the Ecole insisted on their integration into the faculty, Laval might have to appoint professors from the outside. Finally, the Jesuits were offered the Arts annex. Conroy hoped that an engineering and mining faculty would soon be formed because of Canada's rich natural resources and its prolific railway construction.⁵⁷

Conroy's ebullience was unwarranted. His solution to the university question aggravated the disquiet caused by the joint pastoral. Controversy first erupted when he insisted that Quebec City newspapers publish the Propaganda's decision on the Casault case.⁵⁸ Laflèche was profoundly dismayed because the publicity was an open humiliation for

56 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Nov. 19, 1877.

57 APFR, SC 1877 Conroy à Franchi, 30 nov. 1877.

58 Ibid., SC 1877C Laflèche à Conroy, 16 oct. 1877.

the bishop of Rimouski, while the liberals appeared to be completely exonerated. He held Taschereau personally responsible for what he assumed to be a leak and demanded in compensation that Langelier's confession be made public.⁵⁹ Both the apostolic delegate and the Archbishop were amenable to releasing Langelier's statement to the press.⁶⁰ Rector Hamel, though, feared that it would provide ultramontane newspapers with yet another opportunity for slandering the professor.⁶¹ Conroy tried to appease the angered Laflèche by suggesting that the Casault decision was published by mistake.⁶²

Laflèche also decried the double standard behind the legate's appointments to the annex. He did not understand how Jetté could be admitted to the law faculty, while Trudel and Taillon were excluded. The public, he asserted, was coming to believe that Conroy sheltered the Church's enemies and banished its friends. Langelier and Jetté were both leaders of the Liberal Party. The Church could expect no good to come from them.⁶³

Conroy replied that it was Fabre who insisted on Jetté's nomination. He added that the lawyer could not be barred from teaching simply because he belonged to the Liberal Party,

59 APFR, SC 1877C Laflèche à Conroy, 20 oct. 1877.

60 Ibid., SC 1877 Taschereau à Conroy, 24 oct. 1877.

61 Ibid., SC 1877B Hamel à Conroy, 18 janv. 1878.

62 Ibid., SC 1877C Laflèche à Conroy, 20 oct. 1877.

63 ASTR, Laflèche à Conroy, 30 déc. 1877.

even though some of his actions were blameworthy. As for Trudel, he had never stopped vilifying Laval. He had even told Conroy that he would sooner see his sons walk the streets as beggars than attend Laval.

He would not believe even the Pope that any good could come of Laval. Was he the proper person to be made a Professor at the University? Would your Lordship entrust the management of a succursale of the Séminaire of Trois-Rivières to the priests of Nicolet College.⁶⁴

The agreement on the annex collapsed shortly after being concluded. Laval's desire for monopoly and Montreal's for autonomy were irreconcilable. Nevertheless, the university could count on complete Roman support to impose a settlement. During negotiations, Rector Hamel had not concealed his hostility toward the Jesuits, those allies of the ultramontanes against Laval's moderate policies. He especially could not forgive Antonin Braun for the hardships he had wrought on the university.⁶⁵ Consequently, the Rector refused to give the Jesuits carte blanche on appointments, nor even a monopoly of the Arts faculty.⁶⁶

With the Ecole de Médecine, disagreement again centered on its corporate existence. Bourget had warned Fabre that the Ecole would never agree to dissolve itself and that, with the existing animosity between Montreal and Quebec City,

64 ASTR, Conroy to Laflèche, Jan. 2, 1878.

65 APFR, SC 1877C T. Fleck à Conroy, 15 nov. 1877.

66 ACAM, 820.001 Hamel à Fabre, 17 janv. 1878.

Montrealers would fully support their doctors. The bishop would therefore have to avoid at all cost any arbitrary act "qui lui attirerait l'odieux du public en général et celui des médecins en particulier".⁶⁷ Mindful of these prophetic words, Fabre signed a contract with the Ecole by which he recognized its corporate character.⁶⁸

Hamel was already suspicious of certain elements in the Ecole and therefore wanted to control faculty appointments. He was quite willing to have the nucleus composed of Drs. Munro, Rottot, and E. H. Trudel apportion the chairs of the medical annex, as Conroy demanded, but only if "... ces Messieurs sont prêts à accepter notre liste de professeurs"⁶⁹ Should they refuse, the university would name a new nucleus composed of Drs. Rottot, Brosseau, and Trudel, the first two being in sympathy with Laval. This tactic could run into a snag: the papal legate might object to Brosseau because of his unorthodox ideas. In that case, the original nucleus would be retained, but Fabre would, with Rottot's help, impose Laval's appointees on the Ecole.

Hamel also rejected the Ecole's system of seniority. He gave Rottot precedence over Trudel in the nucleus, even though the latter had been at the Ecole longer. To justify himself, he cited university regulations which based seniority

67 ACAM, 820.001 Bourget à Fabre, 30 nov. 1877.

68 Ibid., 820.001 Entente entre l'Évêque de Montréal et l'Ecole de Médecine, 15 déc. 1877.

69 Ibid., 820.001 Hamel à Fabre, 19 déc. 1877.

on professional experience. The Rector added that he had negotiated this matter openly with Fabre and that he could not revoke his decision since the university council had legalized the appointments.

This all too subtle reasoning dismayed Fabre. He was especially piqued that Laval unilaterally released the list of faculty nominations to the press and presented Montreal professors with their letters of appointment.⁷⁰ In the interests of peace, the bishop of Montreal repressed his resentment and urged the Ecole to submit to Laval. Conroy of course fully encouraged him to do so. "I believe that they (the Ecole) will come to an arrangement as soon as they have persuaded themselves that there is no hope of further concessions from the University."⁷¹ Meanwhile, Franchi congratulated the legate for resolving the dispute.⁷²

The Irish prelate then turned to the long-standing dispute between the Sulpicians and the bishop of Montreal. He first assessed the controversy for the Propaganda.

Non è una mera quistione di denaro. La radice della lotta è molto più profonda del debito di Notre Dame. La Curia Vescovile e il Seminario sono due poteri rivali; che tutti e due aspirano ad essere padroni di Montreal.⁷³

He dismissed both parties' demands as exaggerated. Fabre

70 ACAM, 820.001 Hamel à Fabre, 17 janv. 1878.

71 Ibid., 211.003 Conroy to Fabre, June 17, 1878.

72 APFR, SC 1877D Franchi a Conroy, 22 aprile 1878.

73 Ibid., SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 6 sett. 1877.
 "This is not merely a squabble about money. The root of the struggle is deeper than Notre Dame's debt. The bishop and the Seminary are rival powers; each aspires to be master of Montreal."

wanted the Sulpicians to submit fully to episcopal authority. He asked that Rousselot be removed as pastor of Notre Dame and that the debt report be fully implemented.⁷⁴ The Sulpicians repeated their 1870 position: one canonical and civil parish with four annexes under the Superior's exclusive jurisdiction. If this goal were unattainable, they demanded to be exempted from episcopal authority.⁷⁵

Conroy simply ignored these sweeping claims and focused instead on the debt. Fabre insisted on a clear-cut policy. Either the Sulpicians agreed to liquidate the debt or else the bishop would assume this burden in exchange for all the Fabrique's revenues. Whatever the expedient, he wanted the whole issue settled within ten years.⁷⁶ A compromise finally emerged. The Fabrique would retain the cemetery monopoly for ten years, after which parishes could have their individual burial ground. If by that time, the debt still remained, the Church Council would sell real estate to liquidate it.⁷⁷ Simeoni congratulated Conroy on the accord.⁷⁸

Fabre's endurance, however, had been pushed to its limit.

*Il est temps que l'Evêque de Montréal cesse
d'être arrêté dans toutes ces entreprises
par le Séminaire. Il me faut être indépendant*

74 ACAM, RLB 25 Fabre à Conroy, 23 sept. 1877.

75 ASSM, Mémoire du Séminaire de St-Sulpice à Conroy, nov. 1877.

76 APFR, SC 1877 Fabre à Conroy, sans date. (c. oct. 1877)
SC 1877B Fabre à Conroy, 2 janv. 1878.

77 Ibid., SC 1877B Accord entre L'Evêque de Montréal et la Fabrique de Notre Dame, 7 janv. 1878.

78 Ibid., SC 1877D Simeoni a Conroy, 23 maggio 1878.

de lui....⁷⁹

The bishop complained that Conroy forced him to announce the establishment of the university annex much earlier than he had wanted. Against his will, the law faculty was housed with the Sulpicians, rather than the Jesuits. These compromises, he argued, made him lose face. Indeed, the fact that the papal legate skirted what he himself identified as the broader issue, that the Sulpicians still enjoyed special status, confirmed the opinion of Bourget's disciples that the Archbishop's policies were being rejected.

Before his untimely death, the apostolic delegate prepared a draft report which ascribed the twenty years of dissension in Quebec to the clergy's lack of theological education. Inspired, ironically enough, by one of Alexis Pelletier's lengthy briefs,⁸⁰ Conroy noted that priests were totally ignorant of dogmatic theology and scarcely more enlightened about Church history and Holy Scripture. What little they knew of moral theology came from "qualche meschino compendio affatto indegno di una si importante scienza."* A bishop even advised his clergy against studying Church dogma, since he himself had never done so.

79 APFR, SC 1877B Fabre à Conroy, 30 juin 1878.

80 Ibid., SC 1877B Mémoire Pelletier à Conroy, 1 sept. 1877.

* "from a shabby abridgement completely unworthy of such an important subject.

Candidates for the priesthood did not attend seminaries.⁸¹ Instead, they supplied cheap labor for some twenty-five collèges classiques, who offered them in return room, board, and theological instruction. After six hours of teaching per day, however, these young ecclesiastics were unmotivated to study and, worse still, lacked the means to do so.

Arrivati ... al sacerdozio, sforniti di cognizioni (solide?), presuntuosi come sono sempre le persone mezzo-istruite, entrano sull'esercizio de S. Ministero, e cominciano a studiare la Teologia non nei libri dei Dottori della Chiesa ma sui fogli pubblici, redatti anche essi da uomini pieni di passione e di ignoranza della bella verità Cattolica.⁸²

Unfortunately, the bishops showed no inclination to change this deplorable situation. They seemed more concerned about staffing the collèges than in their clergy's education.

Conroy therefore recommended that young ecclesiastics be obliged to complete their seminary studies before being admitted to the priesthood. He argued that there was an overabundance of collèges in Quebec. If their number were

81 Conroy provided statistics for the Diocese of Montreal. He noted that of the 250 students at the Séminaire de St-Sulpice, barely 30 were from Montreal. The rest came from other parts of Canada and the United States. Of the 326 priests ordained in Montreal after the Seminary's founding, 124 had never attended a seminary; 64 had spent a few weeks in one; 38, between one and two years; 48, between two and three years; 41, over three years.

82 APFR, SC 1877 Rapporto Conroy, undated.
 "Candidates enter the priesthood with no substantial education. Haughty, as half-educated people always are, they begin to study theology, not in the writings of the Doctors of the Church, but in newspapers written by passionate men, ignorant of Catholic teachings."

halved, religious education would indeed benefit.⁸³

* * *

George Conroy had a simple view of the crisis in the Quebec Church: clerical zealotry had led to a political, religious, and constitutional confrontation in Canada. Bourget, he claimed, was especially responsible for this serious situation. The Archbishop had actively encouraged a school of thought which made unrealistic demands on government and promoted clerical partisanship. The Archdiocese of Quebec, on the other hand, had consistently followed moderate policies which alone were tailored to the Canadian context. He associated the interests of Catholicism in Canada with Taschereau and the Séminaire du Québec.

This theory was coherent, but was it grounded in reality? The Quebec clergy had unrelentingly fought the Rouges for over twenty years and had generally supported the Conservative Party. Clerical partisanship was not a recent phenomenon. Had parish priests then become unduly partisan? Conroy believed so. He pointed to the practice of withholding the sacraments as widespread in Montreal "e quel che si fa a Montreal si fa anche altrove...."⁸⁴ Yet his letters only referred to two cases in the metropolitan area, at

83 APFR., SC 1877B Fragment of a draft report, undated.

84 Ibid., SC 1877 Conroy a Franchi, 28 sett. 1877.
 "...and what is done in Montreal is also done elsewhere."

Ste-Scholastique and in Jacques Cartier riding. The Irish prelate did not investigate the matter systematically, fearing no doubt that this would prevent him from implementing his instructions. Apart from isolated incidents in Montreal, Charlevoix, and Rimouski, the hierarchy and lower clergy followed the guidelines of the Fourth Provincial Council. Little evidence exists to accuse the Quebec Church on a large scale of undue clerical influence. Conroy's positive assessment of the 1878 election could have applied to preceding ones as well. The 1877 joint pastoral probably did little to alter the clergy's political behavior.

Undue clerical influence became an issue because the Liberals made it so with their electoral legislation of 1874. A few years earlier, they had successfully wooed the clergy with the parti national. But, when its leaders seconded the Rouges in Mackenzie's cabinet, when they jettisoned their principles on ethno-religious issues, when they supported the Sulpicians' resistance to the bishop, the Liberals needed new ways to keep the clergy in line. Like Cartier before them, they wanted a submissive Church. In fact, they used the same arguments about ecclesiastical rights in Quebec as had Cartier and Beaudry. Pierre Tremblay, in a brief to Conroy, termed the legal status of the Church as one of "simple tolérance", its prerogatives being strictly circumscribed by the Imperial Parliament. The hierarchy could best uphold these rights, not by confrontation, but by conciliation and submission to civil

authority. He cited 1776 and 1812 as fine examples of this submission.⁸⁵

As Conroy hoped, his mission satisfied the Liberals. He could have settled the question of undue clerical influence privately. Instead, he chose Taschereau's medium, a pastoral letter absolving the Liberal Party publicly. He also fulfilled Liberal aspirations for a submissive Church. After 1877, not only was undue clerical influence a dead issue, but so was Catholic liberalism. Conroy in fact sacralized Catholic liberalism: he put it beyond the reach of the common parish priest and indeed of his bishop. The Berthier election case was nothing more than the death spasm of the pre-Conroy era.

Conroy blamed ultramontanism for exciting religious passion and for threatening the constitutional order. His

perception, if not simplistic, was certainly biased and short-sighted. Rome had definitely contributed to the crisis in the Quebec Church by allowing controversies to erupt into ideological confrontations, by stumbling from half-measure to half-measure, and finally by imposing solutions with the crushing weight of its authority. The Archdiocese of Quebec contributed substantially to the escalation of tension. The Séminaire de Quebec stubbornly insisted on university

85 APFR, SC 1877 Mémoire P. A. Tremblay, juin 1877.

monopoly, defended an inordinately statist position on dismemberment, and refused to stop the partisan excesses of its professors. Taschereau used his political connections to frustrate Bourget's goals, sponsored appeals to Rome against his suffragan, and failed to deal quickly and effectively with partisanship in his clergy and in the university.

Rather than eradicate both parties' excesses, the apostolic delegate decided to crush ultramontaniam. This meant reverting to an élitist concept of Church-State relations within a bipartisan framework. Conroy clearly revealed this bias in his letter on clerical immunities. He insisted that prelates approach politicians privately when they wanted legislation on ecclesiastical matters. This dispensed with the Catholic backbencher, whom Conroy mistakingly regarded as an accredited episcopal agent; with the Catholic press which agitated for such legislation; with the Catholic theorist who enlightened the politician and the public about ecclesiastical rights. The Nouveau Monde's decline as a diocesan newspaper after 1878 is no mere coincidence. Conroy destroyed its raison d'être.

This élitist trend was also reflected in Laval's annex. The law faculty excluded Trudel, Taillon, and Pagnuelo. It was bipartisan, comprising five Conservatives and two Liberals. Of the six active professors, only three: P. J. O. Chauveau, T. J. J. Loranger and Judge Monk could be considered serious scholars. The Sulpicians, élitists par excellence,

were given complete freedom to organize the theological faculty. The Jesuits, mistrusted by those in authority, were denied a monopoly of the Arts faculty and the right to preserve their own studies program.

In the minds of Bourget and his followers, the Church's independence was not an abstract doctrine. It was rooted in fact: the State recognized ecclesiastical rights by statute. As Pagnuelo argued so compellingly, the Quebec Church enjoyed special status in Canada. Conroy dealt this theory a severe blow. On a deeper level, though, he jolted those who believed in the stability of Catholic rights within Confederation. He required that prelates assess the mood of Protestant opinion in the province, in the Dominion, and in Great Britain before they lobbied with politicians. The papal legate especially wounded the Bourgettistes when he suggested that Canadian Catholics were in an analogous position to the Irish in the United Kingdom. The Bourgettistes vainly pointed to the treaties and legislation which guaranteed ecclesiastical rights in Quebec and to the fact that the province, unlike Ireland, had its own legislature. He rebuffed these appeals because they enflamed Protestant fanaticism. It was not the first time in Canadian history that rights would be disregarded in the name of religious or national consensus.

Just as his evaluation of the crisis in the Quebec Church was partial, so was his solution. A sound theological education would probably have averted some of the excesses

committed in the preceding twenty years. But, it failed to explain why men of substantial theological education like E. Moreau, P. E. Lussier, Antonin Braun, most Jesuits, indeed Filippo de Angelis himself, defended Bourget's cause so ardently. Clearly, education alone could not answer the questions which the second bishop of Montreal asked. These concerned fundamental issues: the relations of prelates and politicians, the Church's rights within the State, and by extension the place of French Canadians within Confederation. His disciples realized early in Conroy's mission that these questions would be suppressed. They expressed their anxiety and opposition in their own awkward way. The papal legate simply failed to look beyond the surface and dismissed their agitation as mere partisanship.

CONCLUSION

The conflicts between Bourget and the two oldest seminaries in the province were at first purely local power struggles. The contestants, however, were not evenly matched. St-Sulpice had held spiritual power in Montreal for two hundred years and as such enjoyed intimate relations with civil authority. Their influence was revealed in the legislative privileges which they accumulated in time. Effective episcopal jurisdiction had only existed in the city for some forty years. Compared with St-Sulpice, Bourget was but a newcomer, if not an upstart. The bishop was similarly handicapped with the Séminaire de Québec which, quite apart from its influence with government, benefitted from the Archbishop's backing. The confrontations taught Bourget about ecclesiastical power politics and about the resistance to change which these relationships fostered.

Dismemberment is the key to understanding how ultramontaniam became embroiled in politics in the 1870's. Without it, the programme catholique and the polemic about the Church's freedom in Canada would most likely never have arisen.

Dismemberment exposed the Sulpicians' raw manipulation of power. To preserve their privileged position in the metropolis and stop Bourget's strictly canonical operations,

they not only called upon the prestige of the Attorney General's office, but on his authority as political boss of Canada East. His creatures, the prothonotaries of Montreal, in fact outlawed dismemberment by refusing civil registers. Cartier's newspaper, La Minerve, publicized and in a sense legitimized the popular unrest which St-Sulpice stirred up through the Fabrique and its agents. Sulpician might can easily be gauged: Gédéon Ouimet began negotiating civil registers with Bourget only after the Seminary formulated its demand for special status; the State recognized half the dismembered parishes only after Rome's explicit order.

When Judge Beaudry, former Fabrique attorney, published his Code des Curés, dismemberment lost its strictly local character. The first general treatment of parish law in Quebec brought together the particular arguments which Beaudry had used to defend Notre Dame. In addition, though, the jurist affirmed that ecclesiastical rights in Canada were dependent on the goodwill of the politician, that is of the Protestant majority. He therefore sparked an ideological controversy which sent shock waves to the very marrow of French Canada. The dissertation scandalized those who had high expectations that Confederation would permit French Canadians to express their particular character in Quebec.

Siméon Pagnuelo took up Beaudry's challenge. His Etudes argued that, since the conquest, the Church's

rights were firmly entrenched in constitutional documents and that the machinations of public men foundered on the people's iron determination to defend these rights.

Pagnuelo also tightly and cogently criticized Beaudry's interpretation of parish law.

For Bourget, a juridical rebuttal was useless without firm legislative support. But, as dismemberment revealed, politicians were all too often motivated by petty or private interests. The programme catholique therefore emerged. It was no coincidence that seven of the twelve signatories were already, or soon would be, involved in Bourget's struggle against the Sulpicians.

The document was not a partisan statement, nor a half-hearted attempt to create a Catholic party. Rather, it called upon conservatives, as were all good Catholics during Pius IX's reign, to rededicate themselves to principles so that when issues involving Catholic rights arose, they would stand together, guided by the purest motives. It also appealed to the electorate to hold their representatives accountable on such fundamental questions. Paradoxically, the document was supposed to operate within a bipartisan framework, but its objectives were clearly non-partisan. The programme was Bourget's response to the Sulpicians' elitist concept of Church-State relations: independent legislators who, together with the Catholic press, protected the Church's integrity and freedom from arbitrary acts.

The Quebec bishops were horrified by this potentially explosive ideological debate which they accused Bourget of generating. They believed that he was leading the Church on a collision course with civil authority. From the outset, however, they had failed to understand the dismemberment controversy. Was it any wonder that they could not grasp its consequences? Baillargeon had urged Bourget to suspend his operations and even sponsored the opposition's appeals to Rome. Larocque deplored the prelate's rigidity and immoderation, while his vicar general confidently asserted that gallicanism and liberalism hardly existed in Quebec. Taschereau believed that what was good for Quebec City was good for Montreal. He proposed that Bourget resolve the parish question by adopting the expedient that the Archdiocese developed for the cure of its city. Yet, the metropolis had different needs from the capital and St-Sulpice was not the Séminaire de Québec. These attitudes betrayed a certain parochial outlook.

They also revealed that the bishops showed greater solidarity with politicians, whom they scrupulously cultivated, than with one of their own colleagues. Personal and family connections between prelates and public men reinforced this solidarity. Taschereau and Langevin's many relatives in politics and the civil service, Guigues and Larocque's intimate relations with federal and provincial leaders, typified the élitism of Church-State relations and gave it an intensely personal dimension.

The university and dismemberment controversies were closely linked. They each caused an identical alignment of groups: Bourget, Laflèche, and the Jesuits on one side; the two seminaries and the remaining bishops on the other. Both camps in fact concocted conspiracy theories to explain this almost automatic polarization. The disputes also followed the same patterns. From basically local power struggles, they erupted into ideological confrontations and spilled over into politics. In the university debate, Laval's desire to monopolize higher education was a basic and essential factor. But, one cannot underestimate the ideological element which grew out of it. Laval insisted on standardizing courses and controlling university appointments to preserve a certain kind of education. When Taschereau was Rector, he wanted a law annex in Montreal, composed of "conservatives", but not as Bourget understood the term. He therefore asked Verreau alone to recommend candidates for the faculty. Similarly, the Séminaire de Québec was terrified at the prospect of a Jesuit-controlled university. Hamel pleaded with the Sulpicians to take hold of higher education in the metropolis. The Archdiocese of Quebec wanted the annex to reflect and reinforce the intimate relations between Church and State, just as Laval did. This triggered Bourget's attack on Laval as a gallican institution.

At the same time, though, the university question, in its ideological phase, was conditioned by dismemberment.

The Séminaire de Québec and Taschereau's pro-Sulpician reports, Laval's failure to refute the Code des Curés reinforced suspicions of gallicanism. The behavior of Bourget, his lawyers, and the Jesuits during dismemberment strengthened Laval's resolve to exclude these extremists from the university.

The accession of a new federal government in 1874 considerably affected the two controversies. St-Sulpice now sought out Liberal legal advisors. Jetté, Dorion, Laflamme, and Langelier upheld the same theories on dismemberment as their Conservative predecessors. Liberal professors at Laval, exploiting the recently approved legislation on undue electoral influence, began a campaign to stop the clergy's intervention in politics.

This attempt to muzzle the clergy particularly worried Bourget. He was convinced that his parish priests had generally not strayed from episcopal guidelines. Those who did were promptly called to order. The bishop saw the need for a new programme catholique. As in 1871, his intention was not to undermine a particular political party, but merely to remind politicians and their electors about "les bons principes". This time, his colleagues agreed. They unanimously subscribed to a document condemning Catholic liberalism and, simultaneously, urged Laval professors to abstain from active politics. Not all bishops were impelled by Bourget's doctrinal concerns. Some considered the Conservative defeat a personal blow and wanted to avenge their vanquished friends and relatives.

The Séminaire de Québec interpreted these actions as the episcopacy's formal adherence to the Conservative Party. The subsequent Charlevoix byelection prompted Benjamin Pâquet and his colleagues to project the local clergy's excesses onto the whole Church. Although recognizing their own professors' abuse of religion during electoral contests, they suppressed this evidence for a higher cause: exonerating the Liberal Party and putting the Church back on a bipartisan track. Their evaluation of the tense ethnic climate suffered from an excessively introverted perspective. They blamed the clergy's political immoderation for Orange fanaticism and prophesied disastrous consequences: the suspension of civil rights, legislative union, religious war. Taschereau responded to the Séminaire's pleas by issuing his mandement of May 1876 which lifted the cloud of suspicion hanging over the Liberal Party.

Rome of course had indirectly stimulated this ideological and political debate. It constantly adopted temporary expedients to resolve the great ecclesiastical controversies. By the fall 1874, however, Benjamin Pâquet began exerting considerable influence over Roman Congregations. The Holy Office came to regard the bishop's public polemic over the programme catholique as a partisan discussion and ordered them to stop. The Propaganda, after studying various equitable solutions to the university question, surrendered totally to Laval's diktat. Cardinal Franchi censured the episcopacy's 1875 resolutions and accused the clergy of overt political interference, without giving them the benefit of a hearing.

At the same time, he clearly equated the Church's welfare with Archdiocesan policy. Was it any coincidence that Rome accepted Bourget's resignation at this point?

The apostolic delegate consummated these policies. Conroy came to Canada not to judge the clergy, but to condemn them. He especially blamed Bourget for their doctrinal and political abuses. The solutions which he imposed betrayed an élitist concept of Church-State relations. On the political front, he effectively annulled the 1875 joint pastoral, acquitted the whole Liberal Party of ecclesiastical censure, and severely reprimanded the Catholic press for perverting Church doctrine and antagonizing civil authority. On the university question, he absolved suspect professors at Laval, while banishing Bourget's disciples from the annex. The law faculty reflected the all-too obvious partisanship which permeated French Canadian society. The Sulpicians, with strong contacts in both political parties, were preferred to the Jesuits whom the politicians deeply suspected. On dismemberment, the Fabrique, that is the Seminary, was allowed to maintain administrative unity of the five Sulpician parishes which, in the eyes of the State, remained mere annexes.

During his last ten years of office, Bourget created a fresh, self-confident, non-partisan movement. Born of his own experience with the arbitrariness and partiality of civil authority, the movement advocated creating institutions free of partisan influence. Bourget himself

founded an independent Catholic newspaper, supported an independent political manifesto, fought for an independent university and Church. He expected that enlightened Catholic opinion would support these institutions. The bishop's achievements were impressive considering that La Fontaine and his successors had institutionalized partisanship to keep French Canada in the Union.

Bourget's movement to a degree carried with it French Canadian aspirations. Coming on the heels of Confederation, it affirmed that ethno-religious rights were not the plaything of politicians and majorities, but were firmly entrenched in the constitution. The bishop and his followers believed that French Canadians could confidently express their particular character in Quebec without derogating from Protestant rights and without affecting the constitutional structure. While upholding Quebec's special status within Confederation, they also fought uncompromising battles for Catholic rights in the rest of Canada.

"Ultramontanism", therefore, was not a political movement. It had no platform, no organization, no structure. Instead, it was an attitude to government. Ultramontanes preferred guaranteeing ecclesiastical rights through independent, non-partisan institutions, rather than through personal links between politicians and prelates. Their aims were strictly religious. This did not prevent ultramontanes as individuals from participating actively in the affairs of State. Their political involvement, however, in no way committed ultramontanism.

Unfortunately, some ultramontanes discredited their movement with violent attacks on prominent individuals and institutions, with extremist theories, with passionate political commitments. Bourget tolerated these excesses of thought and language because he believed his followers to be well-intentioned. This over-indulgence proved to be his downfall. His opponents identified him with this immoderate element. The prelate finally fell from office, a victim of the partisanship against which he fought so vigorously. With him went the dream of a Church and Catholic institutions removed from partisan pressures.

Because the ultramontanes sought to be independent of civil authority, they enjoyed greater freedom of action than the élitists, or gallicans as they were then known. The ultramontanes could criticize governments publicly and directly. Bourget, in fact, was more outspoken than any of his colleagues on New Brunswick Schools during the 1872 election, holding the Conservative cabinet strictly accountable for its policy. Two years later, he was equally merciless with the Liberal administration. In the context of the 1870's, "Catholic rights" had become part of nationalist ideology. When Bourget resigned, therefore, French Canadian nationalism suffered a strong setback. From then on, politicians could settle conflicts between the two national communities without fear that the hierarchy would openly oppose them. The bishop's departure paved the way for the "compromises" to come.

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