State of the Nation or Community of Spirit? Schooling for Civic and Ethnic-Religious Nationalism in Insurrectionary Canada

Bruce Curtis

This article focuses on the two leading projects in the educational "struggle for the hearts and minds" of the people in the British North American colony of Lower Canada (currently the southern portion of the Canadian Province of Quebec) in the wake of the insurrectionary struggles and armed border incursions of 1837-38.[1] (See Figure 1.) English Radicals and Whigs, with some Canadian allies, promoted a broad-ranging reconstruction of colonial government and legal and cultural institutions. The educational component of their project centered on the "nationalization" of the French- and English-speaking populations through the attendance of young people in common schools, where they would be instructed in a nonsectarian civil religion later known as "our Common Christianity." The cooperative management of such schools by adult male property holders would train men in the operations of local representative self-government. Most of those involved in promoting this project for a new form of community understood it to be aimed at the assimilation of French Canadians to a broadly "British" nationality.

The liberal, secular-national project sought to recast the colony's complex state-church relations. From the British Conquest of 1759, the colonial Catholic Church had been a state church, the political organ of a (putative) religious unity. The Crown had severed the colonial church's

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[1]In earlier work, Bruce Curtis, "The State of Tutelage in Lower Canada, 1835-51," *History of Education Quarterly* 37 (Winter 1997): 25-43, I focused on the conflicts that surrounded the *implementation* of interrelated reforms of local government and public schooling in the 1840s. This article deals with an earlier phase in educational politics.

communication with Rome, and religious appointments were subject to the Crown's approval. Later attempts had been made to counterbalance the power of the Catholic Church by endowing the Churches of England and Scotland. The liberal project aimed ultimately to dismantle existing forms of state religion, to make religious association one form of civil association among many.

The Catholic hierarchy whose ultramontane wing grew increasingly active opposed the project. The ultramontanes championed ecclesiastical government against the liberals' social government and countered the drive to capitalist accumulation by promoting large families and the performance of good works. They envisioned the French-Canadian "nation" as one which had spiritual, religious, and linguistic boundaries of association first and foremost. As a religious ideology, ultramontanism opposed the separation of church and state. The ultramontanes saw real-world communities as tributary to the spiritual community and organized administratively through the institutions of parish and diocese. They sought to base municipal government on the units of ecclesiastical government, but the boundaries of the spiritual community were not those of the nation-state. Only Catholic education would transmit the values, beliefs, and technical capacities necessary to sustain the spiritual community.

Secularizing liberalism and fundamentalist Catholicism were not the only positions in contemporary Canadian educational conflicts. Leading Protestant groups opposed common schooling across religious lines, and some Catholics were prepared to consider it. Moreover, the conflict between secularizing state servants and Catholic clergy and laity over education and other dimensions of social government was by no means unique to British North America. What is unusual here is that while liberal reform made the church an agent of civil society, rather than a state organ, this civilized church nonetheless managed to establish itself as a manager and administrator of key dimensions of civil society. At the same time, it was able to present itself as the embodiment of an ethnic-linguistic nation imperfectly represented by the state. Ironically, as Jean-Marie Fecteau has shown, the church used powers ultimately delegated to it by the state to rival the legitimacy of the state as the embodiment of the nation.[2] The struggles of the late 1830s between church and state over public schooling were an important moment in this history.

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[2]Jean-Marie Fecteau, "État et associationnisme au XIXe siècle Québecois: Éléments pour une problématique des rapports État/société dans la transition au capitalisme," in *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Canada* eds. Allan Greer and Ian Radforth (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 134-62; idem., "La construction d'un espace social: Les rapports de l'Église et de l'État et la question de l'assistance publique au Québec dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle," in *L'histoire de la culture et de l'imprimé. Hommages à Claude Galarneau* eds. Yvon Lamonde and Gilles Gallichan (Ste-Foy: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1996), 61-89.

The article begins with some reflections on the sociology of nationalism in its relations with state administration, before considering the opening moves and counter-moves in Lower Canadian secular-religious conflict over schooling. Much of the recent literature on nationalism and schooling has tended to focus on loyalties fostered through the content of curriculum. Following Benedict Anderson's analysis,[3] many writers have analyzed national communities as the result of practices of imagination and communication. My position is that a broader range of practices and conflicts should be studied in national formation. One path to the construction of national community is through the organization of common conditions of subjection and subordination to administration and government. In this light, conflict over Lower Canadian schooling in the late 1830s can be read as conflict over two models for the organization of subjection.

Nationalism and State Formation

To the second edition of his influential *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson added a major new chapter entitled "Census, Map, Museum." The original edition of the work had treated the development of nationalist sentiments and identifications as a practical work of imagination, in which political subjects and citizens came to feel part of a horizontally organized community, commonly bounded by the limits of state territory. Nationalist sentiments flourished on the basis of organized practices of remembering and forgetting in which institutions of public education were directly implicated. The generalization of literacy and the spread of such media of communication as a national daily press underpinned the experience of simultaneity and immediacy at the heart of imagined community. Nationalism flourished in, and perhaps depended upon, opposition to some form of antination, and Anderson outlined varieties of projects for the promotion of sentiments of national solidarity, both those sponsored by state agencies and those originating outside the state system. The possibility was always present, of course, that the boundaries of the nation as "imagined community" and that of the nation-state would not correspond. The work attracted, and continues to attract, sharp criticism for its neglect of the role of political conflict and the implication of hegemonic strategies in nation formation.[4]

Still, Anderson's amplification of the original argument in his new chapter attended more closely to the role of administrative projects aimed at the codification of population, territory, and history in the sustenance of

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[3]Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* 2nd edition (London: Verso, 1993).

[4]For instance, John D. Kelly and Martha Kaplan, *Represented Communities: Fiji and World Decolonization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

imagined communities: the census, which locates everyone in a common administrative space; the map, which represents the community as a bounded space; and the museum, which constitutes common history, superimpose fields of commonality on the myriad empirical differences that may oppose people in their daily lives. National solidarity is not a mere byproduct of such practices for they may be contested. The point is, however, that the universalizing dimensions of administration may furnish infrastructural supports to imagined community and national sentiment.[5]

Yet, if common administrative subjection may be opposed and contested, one might differentiate solidarity, as an emotional phenomenon, from commonality as the shared subordination to the administrative practices by which citizens are tied to the state. Considerable effort has been devoted to investigating the ways in which the "officializing practices" of states cause them to appear as the physical embodiment of the nation and the true repository of national history. Yet R.W. Connell has been among the few contributors to the literature on state formation to point to some of the ways in which political relations are cathected.[6] This matter is clearly an important one for understanding nationalisms. In some state regimes, common political subordination attracts a positive emotional response and the state comes to be seen to embody the nation. In others, as in parts of colonial and postcolonial Canada, common administrative subordination comes to be seen as a violent abstraction superimposed upon "true" identities defined elsewhere—in ethnic-linguistic-religious community for instance.

My concern is with paths to nationalist sentiment that are tied to more or less conscious attempts on the part of intellectuals (both lay and religious) and state servants to configure relations and conditions of association in the promotion of national solidarities. At various historical moments national unity, civic harmony, and social solidarity have been seen to depend upon the incorporation of populations under more or less uniform and universal political and cultural conditions. The modern type case is that of the French republic in the revolutionary period, where projects aimed to universalize many conditions within the national space. Consciously against the arcane localisms of the *ancien régime*, the republican state created a uniform civil status in the *état civil*, moved to standardize weights and measures, mapped the national space into *départements*, standardized the names citizens could adopt, codified law, and regulated language use. Through national education, later French governments sought to encourage national sentiment.

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[5]Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 163-85.

[6]On "officializing practices," see Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). On state formation and cathexis, see R.W. Connell, "The State, Gender, and Sexual Politics," *Theory and Society* 19 (1990): 507-44; also, Carolyn Volger, "Social Identity and Emotion: The Meeting of Psychoanalysis and Sociology," *The Sociological Review* 48 (Winter 2000): 19-41.

In Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of these forces, the state works a more or less durable legitimation of existing power relations by a double inscription of ways of seeing and judging. Written into individual subjectivities as principles of vision and division, and into "the nature of things" by organizational work, official categories may become self-validating. Arbitrarily instituted category systems concerning space, time, temperature, monetary value, and so on are embodied in political subjects in the course of their formation. They tend to be lived spontaneously.[7] Where such projects succeed, solidarities are not simply sentiments but bodily dispositions.

Of course, one must be critical of Bourdieu's tendency to write of the state as an actor, of his inattention to the messy, haphazard, and partial advance of universalizing projects, and of his tendency at times to suppose that official categories are taken up as officials intended them to be (despite his own cautions in this regard). Metric reform, for instance, was a half-century project at least in France, which worked in the domain of weights and measures but which was abandoned in the domain of the clock and calendar.[8] Eugen Weber's work showed how little advance had been made in creating national uniformity as late as the 1870s. The French case is as signal as it is atypical, given the degree of administrative centralization in a republican state directly descended from absolutism. But state-centered administrative projects aimed at the creation of uniform conditions through national territory are commonly tied with nationalist sentiment, even if they are frequently disastrous in their consequences.[9]

One interesting aspect of the Canadian case, in which educational institutions are directly involved, was the failure of most attempts at creating uniform administrative conditions across the colonial territory before the Confederation of 1867 and their partial success after that date. The infrastructural conditions for a common nationality were very unevenly developed. Localisms and regionalisms flourished in part because of the work done by intellectuals, clerics, and some state servants to prevent the emergence of a pan-Canadian nationalism. Yet such work could itself more

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[7]Pierre Bourdieu, "Ésprits d'État. Genèse et structure du champ bureaucratique," in *Raisons pratiques: Sur la théorie de l'action*, (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1994), 101-45. Translated and abbreviated as "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field," in *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn* ed. George Steinmetz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 53-75.

[8]On these matters, Bruce Curtis, "From the Moral Thermometer to Money: Metrological Reform in Pre-Confederation Canada," *Social Studies of Science* 28 (Winter 1998): 547-70; Christie Davies, Eugene Trivizas, and Roy Wolfe, "The Failure of Calendar Reform (1922-1931): Religious Minorities, Businessmen, Scientists, and Bureaucrats," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12 (Summer 1999): 251-70; Witold Kula, *Measures and Men* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[9]James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).

easily succeed because ethnic-cultural, religious, and class-political divisions made the articulation of a common national imaginary difficult, especially before the development of a citizenship regime. The grounds on which one might be loyal to the state as the embodiment of national community were ambiguous at best, given the realities of colonialism, linguistic, ethnic, and religious divisions. In Lower Canada, the attempt was made by liberals in the late 1830s precisely to tie political allegiances to a representative-democratic state.

Lower Canada

The liberals were placed to reconstruct colonial government both because of the political party situation in England and because an armed insurrection in Lower Canada in 1837 had made colonial reform a necessity. Colonial political struggles were complex, but the leaders of a popular *patriote* party, in control of the elective colonial Legislative Assembly and broadly supported by village notables and a substantial section of the peasant population, had refused to vote expenses for the conduct of civil government until a wide variety of demands for reform were met. The Crown had offered concessions, but the Assembly's demands seemed to amount effectively to the severance of the colonial tie. The operation of the colonial Parliament was more or less effectively frozen from early 1837; and the *patriotes* worked effectively to undermine the authority of the Crown in the District of Montreal, organizing their own governmental institutions. In November, the conflict issued in armed struggle, during which the *patriote* forces were smashed by regular troops. A second wave of struggle in late 1838 was similarly suppressed. Political divisions did not correspond perfectly to religious, ethnic, or class divisions. Some *patriote* leaders were anglophone Protestants; some of their opponents in the "bureaucratic" or Constitutional party were francophone Catholics. Yet *patriote* policy had some strongly anticlerical elements. Although a few priests supported the insurrectionists, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church offered strong support for the Crown.[10]

The dominant interpretation on the part of the Radical and Whig intellectuals sent to sort out the Canadian government after the suppression of the first wave of insurrections concluded that the misguided eighteenth-century colonial policy of attempting to preserve the French language, the seigneurial system, and the Catholic religion in Canada as a prophylactic against American republicanism ultimately produced political conflict. The colonial constitution of 1791 proved to be flawed in its distribution

[10]Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People. The Rebellion of 1837 in Lower Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Elinor Senior, *Redcoats and Patriotes: The Rebellions in Lower Canada, 1837-38* (Ottawa: Canada's Wings, 1985).

of powers between appointive and elective branches of government, resulting in an obnoxious jumble of legal, economic, cultural, and religious institutions that characterized Lower Canada. Existing institutions worked to stupefy and to unman most men. Peasant men were illiterate and uninterested in politics; peasant women were more literate than men and more likely to engage in commerce. Such uneducated peasant men, incapable of judging independently in political matters, thus became susceptible to demagogic agitation. The complete absence of any representative local government bodies with effective powers of taxation outside the two main colonial cities of Montreal and Quebec created patronage politics in which parliamentary deputies could keep their constituents in a state of dependence. Liberal reformers agreed with Alexis de Tocqueville, who visited Quebec late in the summer of 1831 and who was personally acquainted with some of those active in Lower Canadian reform, that "the habit of thinking and governing for oneself is indispensable in a new colony."[11] None of this existed in Lower Canada under the seigneurial system, and hence the spirit of "British improvement" could not flourish. Moreover, the central government had no agents of its own in localities and no means of acquiring regular policy information from or of intervening in them.

For the liberals, the political problems that faced Lower Canada in the insurrectionary period were legion. The preservation of prerevolutionary French civil law, together with past land-granting policy, prevented capitalist accumulation and commercial development in the colony. No system of property registration existed. Land could be encumbered by the attachment of a whole host of claims which no potential purchaser had any means to discover until a purchase was complete and, in the seigneuries, quasi-feudal relations of production continued to exist. To English liberals, who had been instrumental in securing the 1836 English Registration Act, under which the General Register Office was equipped to trace property titles, the Canadian situation was simply absurd. Women had unacceptable rights of dower over men's property, another way in which existing institutions unmanned men.[12] To add to the confusion, the legislature had

[11]Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Harper, 1952), 430n; also, Jean-Michel Leclercq, "Alexis de Tocqueville au Canada (du 24 août au 2 septembre 1831)." *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 22 (Fall1968): 353-65; Jacques Vallée, ed. *Tocqueville au Bas-Canada* (Montréal: Éditions du Jour, 1973); on Mill, Bruce Curtis, *True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education, and State Formation in Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), Ch. 1.

[12]On dower, Bettina Bradbury, "Debating Dower: Patriarchy, Capitalism and Widows' Rights in Lower Canada," in *Power, Place and Identity: Historical Studies of Social and Legal Regulation in Quebec* eds. Tamara Meyers *et al.* (Montreal: Montreal History Group, 1998), 55-78. On registration in England, Edward Higgs, "A Cuckoo in the Nest? The Origins of Civil Registration and State Medical Statistics in England and Wales," *Continuity and Change* 11 (Winter 1996): 115-34.

created a dual system of weights and measures—prerevolutionary French measures and pre-1824 English measures. Furthermore, after 1774 the Crown had reestablished the right of the Catholic Church to tithe in its parishes. In 1791, to counterbalance this policy, one-seventh of all granted lands in the colony was reserved for the support of the Churches of England and Scotland. A further portion was reserved to the Crown for revenue purposes, and these parcels were interspersed with those opened for settlement, thereby blocking settlement and road building.

The Whigs and Radicals, in conjunction with some Canadian allies, proposed a thoroughgoing reconstruction of conditions in Lower Canada. In addition to altering the structure of the state system in the interests of bureaucratic administration, major initiatives focused on property relations, local government, land granting, and education, with which I am particularly concerned here. Many of those involved in these initiatives were convinced that it was past time to move towards the assimilation of French-Canadians to English language, legal, and political institutions, either by a frontal assault or by marginalizing them in a colony thrown open for English and Irish immigration. The project depended upon the creation of uniform conditions of political subordination for men in a new liberal civil society. The creation of a common school system, both by virtue of its ideological content and through the practical training it offered by participation in local administration, represented a key means of both political administration and ethnic assimilation.

Comparatively large amounts of public money had been spent by the Lower Canadian Legislative Assembly to subsidize rural and urban elementary schools in the 1830s, perhaps as much as £150,000 [approximately $600,000] in a colony with a population of about 600,000. In 1829, the legislature had wrested control over local school management from the Catholic churchwardens and had vested it in the hands of elected local trustees. A Permanent Committee of the Assembly repeatedly modified school legislation and oversaw the functioning of the schools. By 1836, Lower Canada's school legislation appeared progressive and precocious on paper. Graded collective instruction; systematic local record-keeping practices, with records open for public inspection; school visitation by clergymen, magistrates, and militia officers; a school prize fund; legally defined school districts; and a proposal for the creation of normal and model schools comprised some of its features. The Permanent Committee repeatedly considered improvements to the system and, by 1836, the legislature funded about 1,200 schools.[13]

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[13]L.-P. Audet, *Le système scolaire de la Province de Québec* Vols. V-VI. (Québec: Les Éditions de l'Érable, 1955-6); Bruce Curtis, "Public Education and the Manufacture of Solidarity: Christopher Dunkin's Design for Lower Canada," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 35 (November 2002): in press.

Yet the elected trustees lacked taxation powers and a corporation entitled to hold property in continuity. For most of the period, the legislature renewed the school monies by an annual vote. Parliamentary deputies determined schools eligible for funding and so could use the school grant as a patronage fund. For part of the period, they could also determine the boundaries of school districts in their ridings and controlled the prize fund. The Lower Canadian school system thus consisted of a hodgepodge assemblage of attempts at a social government of education and venal practices, the whole exacerbated by the increasingly antagonistic relations between the Assembly, which controlled all money bills, and the executive branch of government, which could veto its legislation.

In 1836, the appointed Legislative Council rejected the Assembly's school bill and insisted that rural schooling be placed under the control of a general board of education, or at least under county boards, before voting for any new money. The Assembly did not respond, and all public funding for elementary schools ceased from 1 May.[14] From that date until a new Common School Act came into effect in 1842, no public funding for rural elementary schools existed and no central government body oversaw educational administration. The failure of the school bill revived clerical interest in elementary education and set the stage for a political contest between liberal reformers and the Catholic hierarchy over the nation's schooling.

The Catholic Clergy and Rural Schooling

Both the ultramontane wing of the Catholic hierarchy in Montreal and the more moderate wing in Quebec saw the failure of the 1836 school bill as a welcome opportunity to assert religious authority over schooling. To fill the gap left by the end of public funding for rural schools, the bishops sought to revive the Vestry School Act of 1824. That act allowed the churchwardens to use up to a quarter of the vestry's funds for elementary schooling and to hold property and to receive gifts and donations for this purpose. The act remained in force, although it had been rendered ineffective when the Assembly passed the 1829 Trustees' School Act. The Trustees' Act placed the control of rural schools, subsidized by public money, under the supervision of locally elected trustees and county school visitors. It was modified repeatedly and renewed for short periods in the years after 1829: the 1836 School Bill refused by the Legislative Council represented another version of it. Yet none of the Assembly's school acts had repealed the Vestry School Act, and the bishops seized upon it as the vehicle for an investment in rural schooling. Soon after the refusal of the 1836 bill,

[14]The liberals repeated the criticisms of a committee of the Legislative Council which had examined and recommended the rejection of the 1836 School Bill. For the committee's text and resolutions, *Montreal Gazette*, 24 March 1836.

Msgr. J.-J. Lartigue of Montreal urged the Bishop of Quebec to "take advantage of the failure of the elementary (or trustees') school Act to recommend everywhere the erection of vestry schools in every parish." (See Figure 2.) However, Lartigue warned that care was needed not to reveal "the desire that we have for the clergy to seize the education of the people as it has a right to do," because of the opposition such a move would likely engender.[15]

On 1 May 1836, Lartigue again urged Bishop Joseph Signäy of Quebec to send a circular to the parish priests promoting the establishment of parish schools as a way of responding to the closing of the public schools. (See Figure 3.) "Besides the honour it would do to the Church," such an initiative was "the only way to wrest the future generation away from a detestable education." Lartigue expressed alarm after reading in the press that "the laity are going to renew their bad law of 1829 as soon as they can, if we neglect this precious and perhaps unique occasion to seize the instruction of youth."[16] Signäy had already acted. His circular of 1 May 1836 attempted to place existing elementary schools under the direction of the vestries by urging the latter to fund them under the conditions of the Vestry School Act, provided that students continued to pay fees and that the sexes were separated. He extended blanket authorization to the *curés* (i.e., the curates—priests with administrative responsibilities at the parish level) to expend up to a quarter of the vestry funds for school support and explicitly encouraged them in a pastoral letter to persuade the churchwardens of the advantages of such a policy and to convince parents to pay school fees.[17]

The bishops do not seem to have done anything to gauge the effects of the encouragement offered by the circular of May 1836 until they learned of liberal reform plans in the summer of 1838. The nomination of a Commission on Education, charged by the governor, Lord Durham, with designing an educational reform, pushed them to act again with respect to rural elementary schools. On 23 July 1838, Lartigue shared with Signäy his fear that the government was going to impose a general system of education on the colony. The danger was not so much from Durham as from his "acolytes," among whom there were some obvious heretics, and Lartigue laid out the line that the bishops should take. If Durham was to get their support for any general system, there would have to be independent Catholic and Protestant education offices. The bishops would have to ensure that the Catholic office was clearly under the influence of the clergy and Durham must be

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[15]"Correspondance de Mgr Jean-Jacques Lartique 1836-1837," in *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec pour l'année 1944-1945* (Québec: Imprimeur de sa Majesté le Roi, 1945), 28 March 1836, v.8, 154.

[16]"Correspondance de Mgr Jean-Jacques Lartique," 1 May 1836 v.8, 133.

[17]Archdiocèse du Québec, *Mandements, Lettres Pastorales et Circulaires des Evêques de Québec*. Volume troisième. (Québec: Imprimerie Générale A. Coté et Cie., 1888): 341-2, 2 May 1836.

Figure 2. Mgr. J.-J. Lartigue (1777–1840), by C.W. Jefferys

Credit: National Archives of Canada, C69286

convinced to attribute all the revenues from the old Jesuit Estates to it. If he refused, he should be warned that his system would fail just as had an earlier attempt to create nonsectarian instruction.[18]

Lartigue raised the tone of his fears in a letter two days later to Msgr. Turgeon, Signäy's co-adjutor. Pointing to alarming anti-Catholic material that had appeared in the *Morning Courier*, the paper edited by the Education Commission's secretary, Lartigue wrote that he "had already had warnings from London that plans were being set in motion to decatholicize this Province by means of education, as had recently been attempted in Ireland." His fears were confirmed by reading the proclamation creating the Education Commission in the official *Gazette*. As far as Lartigue was concerned, this commission was nothing more than a plan to snoop into the Church's schools and charitable institutions and he claimed the inspector-in-chief would undoubtedly be none other than Jacob Mountain, the Anglican bishop. Any bill issuing from the commission should be made to fail, and if this was not possible, Lartigue urged intransigent insistence on the formation of separate confessional boards.[19]

In August 1838, as the Education Commission prepared its enquiry into rural educational conditions, Lartigue and Signäy belatedly attempted to discover what the *curés* had done with respect to vestry schools by demanding that they respond to a circular containing a list of questions:

> 1st How many schools are there in your parish?
> 2nd How many boys' schools, and how many girls' schools?
> 3rd How many children attend each school?
> 4th Apart from reading and writing, what is taught in these schools?
> 5th Does your parish vestry support any of these schools; and if so, what sum does it allow for this object?

The priests were also to inform the bishop if there were no schools in operation and, to his version of the circular, Lartigue added the remark that the information sought would not only inform him about the state of education in his diocese, but would also be useful "in relation to the communications which we might have with the government on the education of the country; because attempts are being made to insinuate to foreigners that there is no instruction of any kind, or almost none, in our country districts."[20]

The speculation in the literature has been that the bishops' initiatives, and the public mindedness of village notables, must have allowed at least

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[18]"Correspondance de Mgr Lartique et de son Coadjuteur, Mgr Bourget, de 1837 à 1840," in *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec pour l'année 1945-1946* (Québec: Imprimeur de sa Majesté le Roi, 1946), 23 July 1838, v.9, 36.

[19]"Correspondance de Mgr Lartique et de son Coadjuteur," 25 July 1838 v. 9, 88.

[20]For Signäy's version, Signäy to curates, 13 August 1838, 60CN, Gouvernement du Canada Vol.A: 131, Archives de l'Archediocèse de Québec [AAQ]; for Lartigue's comment, "Correspondance de Mgr Lartique et de son Coadjuteur," Pièces et Actes, t.3 f.80.

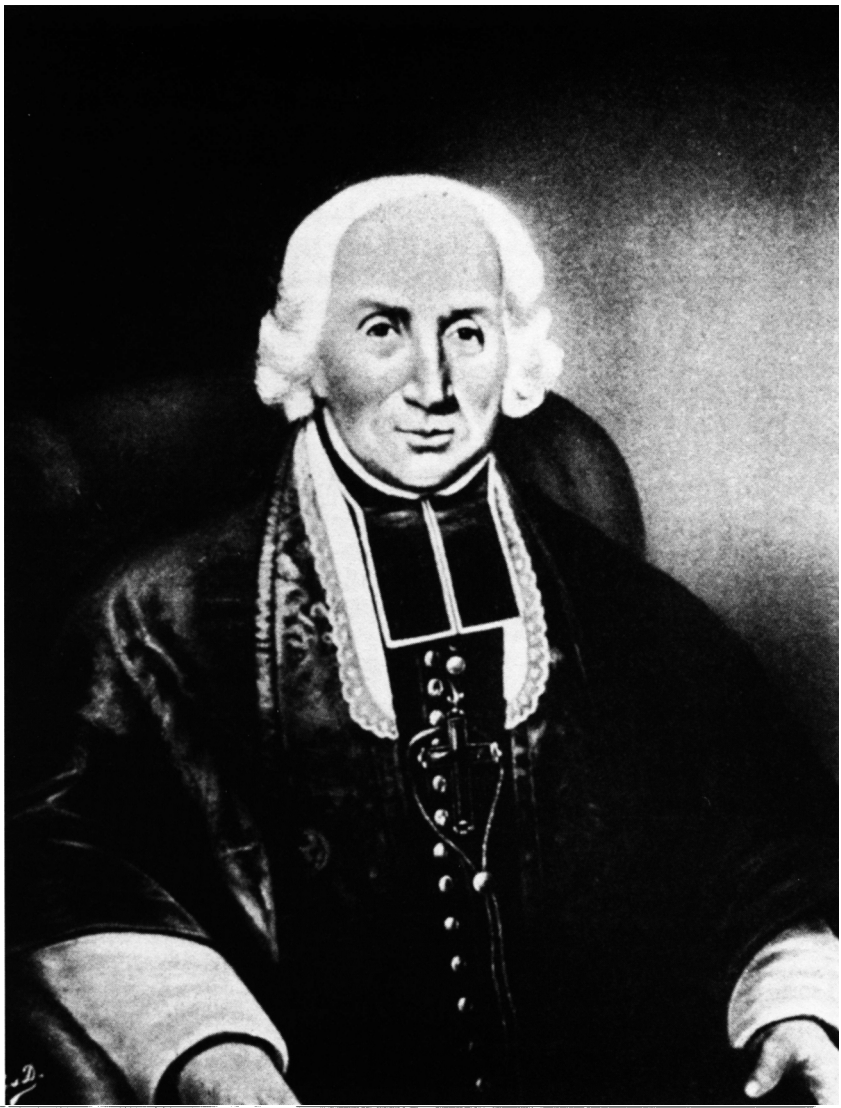

Figure 3. Mgr. Joseph Signäy (1778–1850)

Credit: National Archives of Canada, C49652

half the public schools to survive as vestry schools after 1836.[21] The responses to these circulars have not yet been invoked. Signäy, at least, received prompt replies from most of the *curés*, but they demonstrated precisely what the bishops had hoped *not* to find. In most parishes the vestry did nothing; many parishes reported no schools of any sort; and most only offered rudimentary, private, and fee-based instruction. In nineteen of the twenty-six parishes which responded to the circular in Signäy's diocese, the vestry offered no funds whatsoever for schooling. Several of the remaining parishes offered support of some sort out of legacies left by former *curés*; most subsidized the fees of a few poor students in a private school. Others claimed the vestry was too poor to offer any aid to schools but were encouraged by the bishop's enquiry, since it seemed to presage some systematic attention to the question. *Curé* Gosselin from St. Jean d'Orléans, for instance, wrote,

> In the past, this parish made generous efforts to acquire for itself the precious advantage of education, by purchasing at its own cost a convenient site and a commodious school house according to the Bill of 1824; but bad years then slowed down this initial zeal: However, there were as many as three well run Schools during the period of aid from the government; but lacking this aid during the years of scarcity, they have ceased. Today we count only three small private schools held by three young ladies in private houses, each having about fifteen young children. The vestry did not consider it appropriate, given its modest revenues, to allow anything for this purpose.[22]

The bishops learned not only that the vestries had been inactive but also that a private local educational economy continued beyond clerical control. And they learned this much not because they had been active in promoting a Catholic school system on their own but rather because they confronted a new liberal educational initiative.

"How shameful that there isn't a single Catholic school in the whole township of Rawdon," wrote Lartigue to *curé* McReavy in Kildare, after the responses to the circular had begun to come in, "while there is already a protestant school with 50 children." Lartigue urged McReavy to get an English master and a vestry school so that the testaments and tracts the Protestant teacher had been distributing could be got away from the Catholic children.[23] But the bishops clearly found themselves on defensive ground.

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[21]Audet, *Système scolaire* VI; Richard Chabot, *Le Curé de campagne et la contestation locale au Québec de 1791 aux troubles de 1837-1838* (Montréal: Hurtubise HMH Ltée., 1975); Andrée Dufour, *Tous à l'école: État, communautés rurales et scolarisation au Québec de 1826 à 1859* (Ville La Salle: Éditions Hurtubise HMH Ltée., 1996).

[22]Ant. Gosselin à Signäy, 24 August 1838, 60CN, Gouvernement du Canada, Vol.A:156, AAQ. Interestingly, Gosselin's reply to his bishop is one of several which can be compared with the same person's reply to the enquiry of the Education Commission, which was soon to follow; see Commission return Paroisse de St Jean, co. d'Orléans, 7 November 1838, RG4 B30 vol. 111, N[ational] A[rchives of] C[anada]. Gosselin reported four private schools in the second return.

[23]"Correspondance de Mgr Lartique et de son Coadjuteur," 1 September 1838.

They did not have the time, let alone the financial resources or the logistical capabilities, necessary to organize a religious-based school system as a counter to the Education Commission, and their attempts to revive the 1824 Vestry School Act had obviously failed miserably. It would have been most difficult for them to claim publicly that the Church cared about the education of the people, especially if the Education Commission conducted the planned enquiry. When the commission began circulating its own very detailed questionnaires about local schooling conditions as a prelude to legislation in October 1838, the bishops instructed the *curés* not to respond and the great majority in the District of Montreal complied.[24]

The Education Commission and Secular Nationalism

The Commission on Education was proclaimed on 13 July 1838 and charged with gathering information on educational conditions and suggesting needed reforms. Commissioner Arthur Buller, younger brother to governor Durham's chief secretary Charles Buller, M.P., left the colony at the end of October 1838 just as the commission's enquiry was underway. Christopher Dunkin completed the bulk of the commission's work, including its final report and draft legislation for Buller.

The enquiry proved to be a remarkably sophisticated exercise in the developing "social science," although most of the documents concerning the work preliminary to it remain elusive. However, it is clear that an interest in making an educational policy diagnosis did not guide the investigation. It was common knowledge very early on in the press, on the part of the Catholic bishops and for Protestant leaders, that the commission would propose some version of the Irish national school system for Lower Canada. By mid October 1838, Buller had circulated both an outline plan and draft legislation. Explicit discussion about educational reform as a means to creating national unity occurred.[25]

The Irish system was sophisticated administratively and pedagogically, despite the fact that local patrons controlled schools in the absence of local representative government. The system had been organized in the wake of the Catholic Emancipation of 1829, following a long history of failed attempts by the English to use educational foundations to

[24]They did so both in blanket terms and in correspondence with individual *curés*; for instance, Bourget to Gagnon, 26 October 1838, ACorrespondence de Mgr Ignace Bourget de 1837 à 1840," in *Rapport des Archives de la Province de Québec, 1945-6* (Montréal: Imprimerie de sa Majesté le Roi: 1946), v. 1, p.233.

[25]See Bruce Curtis, "The Buller Education Commission; or, the London Statistical Society Comes to Canada, 1838-42," in *The Age of Numbers/L'Ére du chiffre*, eds. J.-P. Beaud and J.-G. Prévost (Quebec: PUQ, 2000):278-97; and idem., "Education and the Manufacture of Solidarity," for surviving sources and for the enquiry as inventory rather than diagnostic science.

proselytize Irish Catholics, and English Whigs and Radicals adopted it as a model of educational organization. The managing National Commission offered grants to local schools which complied with a set of administrative conditions. The commission ran a highly regarded normal school and sponsored model schools for teacher training, ran model farms, maintained a corps of inspectors, insisted upon detailed record keeping in local schools for purposes of accountability and central monitoring, and published and subsidized the distribution of a series of schoolbooks. At the same moment that they proposed a modified Irish system for Canada, English liberals promoted the same system for England itself.[26]

A book of *Scripture Extracts* figured centrally in the Irish series of reading books. This book contained biblical extracts selected by a committee composed of Irish Protestant and Catholic clergymen. The extracts made it possible to promote the joint education of Catholics and Protestants by overcoming practical and doctrinal divisions on the matter of religious instruction. The commissioners' rules specified clearly that where schools contained students of mixed religious background, nothing other than the material in the extracts, read without note or comment by the teacher, was to be presented during school hours. If parents wished more religious instruction for their children, they could offer it outside regular school hours or in the absence of children from other denominations.[27]

The Irish schools thus propagated a new civil religion. In general political terms, they characterized a wider nineteenth-century move away from religious and towards secular forms of legitimation. Rational appreciation of the benefits of the political-economic order on the part of students whose intelligence was selectively developed at school was to take precedence over slavish routine, ritual, and dogma—although directly biblical justifications of the existing political order and of the distribution of wealth were still offered. Schooling in common would create solidarity and harmony. For English liberals, the Irish schools seemed to offer one solution not only to the "Irish Question" but also to the larger question of reconstructing political rule in England and dealing with the developing "internal

[26]On the Irish system generally, Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970); Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (London, Ontario and Sussex, England: Althouse Press and Falmer Press, 1988); Curtis, *True Government*; J.M. Goldstrom, *The Social Content of Education, 1808-1870* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972).

[27]On the content and history of the Irish texts, Goldstrom, *Social Content*; on their introduction and subsequent fate in Canada West, Bruce Curtis, "Curricular Change and the 'Red Readers': History and Theory," in *Re-Interpreting Curriculum Research: Images & Arguments* eds. Geoff Milburn, Ivor Goodson and Robert Clark (London, Ontario/Sussex, England: Althouse Press/Falmer Press, 1986), 41-63; and idem., "The Speller Expelled: Disciplining the Common Reader in Canada West," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 22 (Fall 1985): 346-68.

colony," the industrial proletariat. In 1838, before Protestant opposition became more severe, English liberals could easily believe that the Irish schools worked with a Celtic Catholic peasantry; it followed they should also work with a French Catholic one.[28]

Yet as the liberals attempted to work the Irish project in Canada, the grounds on which they could explicitly encourage allegiance to a national state proved fragile. Unlike Ireland, Lower Canada maintained a Parliament and a free press that provided expression for explicitly colonial interests. The preservation of French language, Catholic religion, and feudal relations of production in Lower Canada made the Irish project—paired as it was to English-language instruction—particularly dubious. Attempts even in the English-dominated colony of Upper Canada to anchor loyalties in a generic British nationality founded on the dominance of a state church—even one stretched to include the Scottish Kirk—had been unsuccessful in the 1830s. "Nationalization" through the schools was to work in the ways I outlined in my discussion of dimensions of state formation. It would create commonalities through common administrative subordination: association at school and discipline in a common language and culture. Solidarity would grow from commonality, but it is clear that this project demanded a high initial degree of state coercion, which is not to say that attempts to enlist the support of key colonial groups were not made.

Religious Opposition

For the project to succeed ultimately, the bishops had to be persuaded to support the idea of mixed schools for Protestants and Catholics. The colonial Catholic church remained subject to state power and, although the bishops demanded concessions in recompense for their opposition to the insurrection, the liberals had both carrot and stick at their disposal. Both the colonial Chief Secretary, Charles Buller, and the Education Commissioner, Arthur Buller, met repeatedly with the bishops and solicited their support for educational reform, but there was no joy to be had here. Especially notable is Arthur Buller's attempt to get Signäy to come out formally and in print in support of the *Scripture Extracts*, on the eve of Buller's own departure for England. Buller wrote him a very long and detailed letter, in which he made it clear that there was no question of leaving "the sole management of education to the clergy," both because doing so would encourage "sectarian jealousies and sectarian injustice," and because "an institution in which the whole nation is so seriously interested should be directed by national officers specifically appointed for that purpose and directly responsible to the nation."

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[28]For the classic sociological analysis of civil religion, Émile Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Buller hoped Signäy would agree with him that divisions of "race" and religion could only be overcome in Lower Canada if "everyone of its institutions" was "framed with a view of uniting and nationalizing its entire population." They both knew that "the unity of nations is seriously disturbed, frequently altogether destroyed" by the kinds of divisions existing in the colony, and Buller argued that "the surest, indeed the only way of making them harmless is to bring all classes together as much and as often as possible, and most studiously so, in their youth, when friendships are more easily formed and a mutual confidence begotten." Common schooling caused children to "become friends;" separate schooling sowed enmity. "In a word," Buller insisted, "the first and most decisive step towards the great end of nationalization is already taken, when the Inhabitants of a country mix freely in common schools."[29]

The Catholic bishops explicitly denounced the project of a civil religion as the basis of national unity. Lartigue had done so as soon as he read letters promoting it in the *Morning Courier*. As he put it to Signäy's co-adjutor, Msgr Turgeon, "with their *general education*, they will also give their students a *general religion*, which they will hammer into their heads, that is to say an absurdity."[30] On 5 October 1838, Lartigue stressed in a letter to Charles Buller that Catholics and Protestants would have to be separated in whatever school law the government might contemplate. The government must "establish two Boards of education, independent one of the other, but both connected to the government: the Catholic Board[,] composed entirely of persons from its denomination, and particularly members of its clergy, would choose the masters and regulate the teaching of his subordinates; and the other Board would be regulated as it might wish." If the statement that the Catholic board would be connected to the government may have represented a recognition on Lartigue's part that the church would not be able to fund schools alone, after an interview with Arthur Buller he made it clear that on the question of common instruction "our principles differ too much for us to agree on the main point."[31]

The Catholic bishops were not the only opponents of civil religion. A meeting of prominent Protestant clergymen in Quebec on 30 October 1838 published a series of resolutions strenuously opposing any system of education that would remove doctrinal instruction and the use of the Bible in the schools. One resolution read that "no System of Education

[29]For the complete text and a commentary, Bruce Curtis, "Irish Schools for Canada: Arthur Buller to the Bishop of Quebec," *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 13 (Spring 2001): 49-58.

[30]"Correspondance de Mgr Lartique et de son Coadjuteur," Lartigue to Sidyme, 13 August 1838, v.9, 95 original emphasis.

[31]Lartigue to C. Buller,5 October 1838; to A. Buller, October 1838, "Correspondance de Mgr Lartique et de son Coadjuteur," Pièces et Actes t3 f.84 v, 9.

whatever should be termed a *National one*, which is not based on the great Protestant Principle of the unrestricted use of the Holy Scriptures." And the meeting also resolved that "National Union" could be "best promoted by equal and equitable principles of Public Administration and by mutual expressions of individual kindness and conciliation among the different classes of society in relation to each other, and not by any lavish demand of conscientious principle, on either side, of parties who may sincerely differ from one another."[32]

The four Catholic bishops had met with Governor Durham a short time before Buller wrote to Signäy, delivering a lengthy petition in which educational matters figured centrally. The petition expressed Catholic anxiety about "certain bills which, it is claimed, are now being contemplated and prepared by some agents of the government." These bills, especially a plan for education, would injure the rights and customs of French Canadians, rights and customs guaranteed by law in 1774 and which had never been abrogated. Catholics of all national origins appeared united in their belief that the government should limit itself to the financial encouragement of Catholic separate schools in sufficient numbers to serve the population. The choice of teachers, books, and the mode of instruction should be under church control and, while the study of the English language might be encouraged, the rights of everyone to instruction in their native language must be preserved. Moreover, the petition continued, fathers of families must be allowed to enjoy their inalienable right to raise their children in the manner they might judge appropriate. If the government followed this suggestion, the bishops concluded, it would lead before long to "a useful, liberal, even brilliant education" system. Any other system would be bound to fail.[33]

The positions of the liberals and the Catholic clergy were intransigently opposed, with a lack of public or official debate over mutual association as a means to national solidarity. The closest the available documents come to a debate is in Signäy's replies to Arthur Buller's lengthy exposé of the principles of common instruction and to the draft of his school bill. Even here Signäy did not deign to engage with the substance of what Buller saw to be the issue: that since Catholics and Protestants shared a "common Christianity," schooling could be in common and under state control. He rejected Buller's claim that a common education for children of all religious denominations was a necessity on narrow technical grounds. If it was necessary at all, it would be applicable only in a few of the colony's mixed

[32]MSS BD214, Protestant Education in the Province of Quebec, folder c.1/19, McGill University Rare Books Library.

[33]Petition to Lord Durham, 28 October 1838, "Correspondance de Mgr Signäy," M f.115 r.

Catholic and Protestant townships, and only then as an interim measure while awaiting the creation of separate schools. In the organized parishes, such a system would be completely useless because they were almost without exception Catholic in population. Signäy pointed out that Buller had only to look at the official census of 1831 to see the extremely minimal proportion of Protestants in the parishes, and he then repeated the points the bishops had made to Durham in their petition.

Buller, Signäy continued, confused religious differences with religious antipathies in his desire for a common system, but the two proved quite different. The bishops would certainly never encourage religious antipathy. They merely sought a fair degree of control over the conduct of the schools, as they had been guaranteed by law in 1774, and this did not mean absolute control, for they had always wished to recognize the rights of fathers. But "this just control, I must tell you frankly," continued Signäy, "does not seem to be sufficiently guaranteed by a Board" as Buller had proposed, which would be "semi-Catholic and semi-Protestant, to regulate the general educational affairs of a people, nine-tenths of whom are Catholic." Signäy then argued that an earlier government had been on the right track in an attempt of 1826 to provide separate confessional committees in a colonial educational administrative body and, if it had a better knowledge of the condition of the country, it would act in the same way now. Given Buller's imminent departure from the colony with the rest of the short-lived Durham mission, one can imagine his pleasure at reading Signäy's parting shot: "I regret infinitely that you and your collaborators, in a work of such importance, have not had the time to acquire a sufficient acquaintance with the condition of the country." Had he done so, Buller would have recognized the wisdom of the bishops' position. Surely, Signäy concluded, "I need not remind you that it is not enough to give a people an education, but it is moreover necessary that such an education be moral and religious. That is the only means to render it true to its God and to its sovereign."[34]

In a second letter of 5 November, which may or may not have followed Buller to England, Signäy gestured towards a response to Buller's proposal to base the school curriculum on common religious principles. Signäy again claimed to speak frankly, although he did not engage with the proposition that there existed a number of tenets which all Christian denominations held in common and which could serve as the basis for common instruction. "In a country where the religion of the majority of the inhabitants was that of the Government," a system of education like the one Buller proposed "might very well be suitable." But this did not exist in Lower Canada, where such a system "would be more obnoxious than useful."

[34]Signäy to A. Buller, 30 October 1838, "Correspondance de Mgr Signäy," v.18, p. 402.

If for no other reason, it was obnoxious because Buller intended to create the position of superintendent or minister of public instruction "which will probably not be given to a Catholic." No guarantee to respect the religious beliefs of the great majority would suffice to overcome the injury this would cause and so inevitably the plan would incite the very religious antipathy Buller wished in his heart to prevent. As far as Signäy was concerned, the matter of the superintendent alone constituted an invincible obstacle to Buller's plan, precluding further comment on its other aspects, such as the proposal to name a board of inspectors or the content of the curriculum.[35]

As the Durham mission retired prematurely to England to write its reports on reconstructing colonial government, the positions in the debate over national education remained fixed and intransigently opposed. The Protestant and Catholic bishops both opposed nonsectarian educational instruction. Arthur Buller's educational report would present it as an unavoidably necessary means to "nationalizing" Lower Canada, and would do so despite the warnings of his secretary, Christopher Dunkin, that no Lower Canadian educational reform would work without the involvement of the Catholic clergy.

Towards the Civilization of North America

Considerations of space preclude an examination of the ongoing initiatives by the Catholic bishops to block Buller's plan from being passed by the imperial Parliament, to inform themselves about the Irish system and the stance of the Irish church in relation to it, and the Vatican's ultimate pronouncement on the matter. Nor can I consider the ways in which the fate of draft legislation based on Buller's project came to be caught up in struggles over colonial governmental autonomy and more general attempts to construct a bureaucratic state system.

Still, Lucia Ferretti's recent dismissal of Buller's educational project as a collection of whimsical ideas, easily defeated by the joint opposition, after 1841, of the clergy of all denominations, French-Canadian members of the new Parliament, and the population as a whole, is overly hasty.[36] As designed by Christopher Dunkin, Buller's project consisted of a hybrid of common schooling systems from New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Ireland. It is difficult to dismiss the latter as whimsical, and in the three states at least they were successfully institutionalized. In addition, the School Acts of 1846 and 1850 in neighboring Canada West bore a striking

[35]Signäy to A. Buller, 5 November 1838, "Correspondance de Mgr Signäy," v.18, p. 408.

[36]Lucia Ferretti, *Brève histoire de l'Église catholique au Québec* (Montréal: Boréal, 1999), 77: 'Les pressions cumulatives très déterminées des Églises de toutes confessions, des députés canadiens-français en bloc et de la population ont cependant vite raison de telles velléités'.

Figure 4. Mgr. Ignace Bourget (1779–1885), by C.W. Jefferys

Credit: National Archives of Canada, C69287

resemblance to the Buller plan, down to the endorsement of the Irish textbooks and the *Scripture Lessons*. Although the Catholic church managed to secure remarkable administrative and ideological powers in Quebec, as Jean-Marie Fecteau has shown, it operated on the terrain of political liberalism and it depended upon the delegation of powers by the state.[37]

Buller's plan failed initially in the Canadas because of the struggles that obtained in the newly united colony and because of the work done to make it fail. In Lower Canada and its successor entities, Canada East and Quebec, the Catholic hierarchy worked to propagate and to organize an alternative notion to social government. It is pertinent to consider briefly the emergence of their project for a "community of the spirit." In keeping with my initial concerns about the infrastructural conditions for commonality and hence, potentially, national solidarity, I offer some remarks about the ecclesiastical government the hierarchy worked to construct in opposition to the social government contained in the public educational project.

After the civil recognition of the diocese of Montreal in 1839, which also immediately involved Bishop Lartigue choosing his own successor without consulting the government, and more especially after the accession of Ignace Bourget, the church undertook a dramatic incursion into social relations in Lower Canada/Canada East. (See Figure 4.) Its political standing had improved in any case because the radical, secular sections of the petty bourgeoisie had been devastated with the smashing of the insurrections and because the Crown was prepared to offer some concessions as a reward for the clergy's loyalty in 1837-38. Then, the hierarchy made common cause with the widespread popular opposition to the liberals' 1840 Act of Union, which joined largely English-speaking Upper Canada with Lower Canada. The church presented itself as the protector of French Canada against the anglicizing ambitions of Tories and imperial politicians. Opposition to political union was intertwined with opposition to liberal governmental reform, especially to the project of creating local representative governmental bodies with powers of taxation, including school boards. The attempt at a frontal assault on French law, language, and the seigneurial system quickly sputtered out.

Church historians point to a variety of factors, both conjunctural and of conscious design, that enabled the Church to extend its organizational reach and influence in the decades after 1840. A major religious revival proved influential. Doctrinal changes, towards a more supple Liguorism, aimed at more humane and more popular religious practice and they also made it possible for lay people to accumulate religious credit from secular good works. The hierarchy cultivated ceremony, spectacle, and multiplied ritual occasions. Equally important, Bourget recruited French religious

[37]Fecteau, "La construction d'un espace social."

orders to emigrate to Canada and increased new Canadian orders, both lay and religious. After touring Europe in 1841-42 and 1845-46, Bourget arranged the return to Canada of the Jesuits and organized the immigration of the Oblats, the orders of Sainte-Croix, and Saint-Viateur, nuns from the orders of Sacré-Coeur and Bon Pasteur.[38] He convinced some Catholic laywomen active in charity work in Montreal to take the veil. Church personnel multiplied rapidly as its governmental organization intensified. Ferretti points out that the number of recognized dioceses grew from one in 1838 to seven by 1874. There were 464 priests in 1840 and 1,412 in 1870; 650 nuns in 1850 and 6,628 in 1900; and the ratio of priests to population decreased from 1:1185 to 1:658 between 1840 and 1870.[39]

By 1851, when the Canadian government managed to pass legislation effectively creating freedom of religious practice, the Catholic church was firmly established. Rather than leading to a secularization of Canadian society and to the replacement of religious with civil administrative institutions, freedom of religion in Canada East confirmed the secular powers of the Catholic clergy. As Lucia Ferretti summarizes matters at mid century "in Canada East, the parish marked the limits of the municipality, the priest continued to hold the civil register, the clergy was busy conquering the right to oversee education, the tithe continued to be a legally defined obligation, and it was the Church rather than the community of parishioners whom the law recognized as the owner of parish property."[40] When the British North American colonies confederated to form the Dominion of Canada in 1867, the new country's constitution left matters of social and educational policy to the jurisdiction of the provinces. The Catholic church was already effectively ensconced.[41]

Common political subordination for the majority in Canada East was inextricably bound with common religious subordination. Yet nationalism demands not just common administrative organization of a population but also conditions and projects that foster sentiments of solidarity. Ultramontane intellectuals, both clerical and lay, pursued a wide-ranging national project. They worked consciously to construct a specially French-Canadian cultural tradition and trajectory in contradistinction to the liberal ideas of the French Revolution. In the nineteenth century, before the realities of industrial capitalism produced a social Catholicism, they promoted an

[38]I have followed the convention of leaving most formal names in the original French. The orders in question were: the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the Order of the Holy Cross, the Clerics of St. Viator, the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, and the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

[39]Ferretti, *Brève histoire*, 62-4; and more generally, René Hardy, *Contrôle social et mutation de la culture religieuse au Québec, 1830-1930* (Montréal: Boréal, 1999).

[40]Ferretti, *Brève histoire*, 183; also, Lucien Lemieux, *L'établissement de la première province ecclésiastique au Canada. 1783-1844* (Montréal: Fides, 1967), 468-9.

[41]Fecteau, "La construction d'un espace social."

anticapitalist, antiurban, agrarian, and pronatalist imaginary, in which French Catholics would expand across the North American continent, colonizing and civilizing it against the ravages of Protestant luxury and liberal demoralization. Agricultural routine and religious ritual would protect the nation from the dangers of hyperrationalism; fecundity and splendor in the church would sustain pride of person and pride in the flourishing French-Canadian nation. A cultural *cordon sanitaire* would block the infections of American materialism. The boundaries of this imagined community were national but not those of the nation state, organizational/administrative but imperfectly mapped onto civil government.[42]

[42]For more on the national project in relation to portrayals of the nation through the census, Bruce Curtis, *The Politics of Population: Statistics, State Formation and the Census of Canada, 1840-1875* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001). For the continuing efforts of intellectuals to prevent the infection of French Canada by the vulgar materialism associated with American culture, Michèle Martin, *Victor Barbeau. Pionnier de la critique culturelle journalistique* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1997).