CONTENTS

National Identification in Winnipeg: An Analysis of School-Naming Events from 1881 to 1976
Jay Goldstein 117

Letter from Bishop Alexandre Taché to his Mother, Concerning his Life with the Chipewyan Nation
Father Gaston Carrière (translator) 131

"Conspiracy and Treason": The Red River Resistance from an Expansionist Perspective
Doug Owram 157

The Flood Hazard at Lumsden, Saskatchewan: Residents' Cognitive Awareness and Personality
Paul Simpson-Housley, Gordon Lipinski and Elroy Trithardt 175

Book Reviews (see overleaf) 189

PRAIRIE FORUM is published twice yearly, in May and November, at an annual subscription of $10.00. All subscriptions, correspondence and contributions should be sent to The Editor, Prairie Forum, Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, S4S 0A2. Subscribers will also receive the Canadian Plains Bulletin, the newsletter of the Canadian Plains Research Center.

PRAIRIE FORUM is not responsible for statements, either of fact or of opinion, made by contributors.

COPYRIGHT 1979
CANADIAN PLAINS RESEARCH CENTER

ISSN 0317-6282
BOOK REVIEWS

75th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE, REGINA. Regina Before Yesterday by John Archer 189
FORAN, MAX, Calgary: An Illustrated History by John Archer 190
SAWCHUK, JOE, The Metis of Manitoba: Reformulation of an Ethnic Identity by Antoine S. Lussier 192
WILSON, C.F., A Century of Canadian Grain: Government Policy to 1951 by F.W. Anderson 194
MACGREGOR, J.G., John Rowand: Czar of the Prairies by Shirlee Anne Smith 196
ARTIBISE, ALAN F.J., Western Canada Since 1870: A Select Bibliography and Guide by Ted Wood 198
KOSTASH, MYRNA, All of Baba's Children by A.B. Anderson 201
DEMPSEY, HUGH A., Charcoal's World by R.C. Macleod 204

PRAIRIE FORUM: Journal of the Canadian Plains Research Center

Chief Editor: Alec Paul, Geography, Regina
Associate Editors: Alan Anderson, Sociology, Saskatoon
L. Crossman, English, Regina
W. Howard, English, Regina
Raymond Huel, History, Lethbridge
M. Evelyn Jonescu, CPRC, Regina
J. Long, Architect, Calgary
R. Macleod, History, Edmonton
G. Mitchell, Biology, Regina
R. Rounds, Geography, Brandon

Coordinator of Publications: Barbara EIDeiry, CPRC, Regina
Editorial Page

Observant readers will notice that in this issue dated Fall, 1978, mention is made of events that have taken place in early 1979—and in the case of the floods of the Red River, perhaps not so early! This is indicative of the publication backlog which has plagued us for some time and which we are endeavouring to clear during 1979. As this issue went to the printers less than three months after the previous one, we are encouraged to see that things are moving in the right direction, for the compilation of material for the 1979 issues is also well under way.

The articles in this issue demonstrate our conception of Prairie Forum as an inter- and multi-disciplinary organ; they have been contributed by a historian, a Catholic archivist, a sociologist and a threesome of geographers. We continue to welcome the submission of papers dealing with prairie-wide concerns. The Editorial Board has decided that the time is ripe for the occasional theme issue in which perhaps half the articles will be related to a selected topic. The first of these, incorporating material on the architectural heritage of the prairies, is planned for the issue of Fall, 1979.

I should like to thank our Associate Editors, our contributors, our referees and the staff of the Canadian Plains Research Center; their efforts make my task much lighter. Special thanks must go to Raymond Huel, Acting Chief Editor for the past year and a great mover for Prairie Forum in other ways too; and to Barbara ElDeiry, Coordinator of Publications at CPRC, whose assistance has been invaluable in so many ways.

ALEC H. PAUL
Chief Editor
National Identification in Winnipeg:
An Analysis of School-Naming Events
from 1881 to 1976

Jay Goldstein
Department of Sociology
University of Manitoba

ABSTRACT. This study tests the validity of the proposition that there has been an increase in the strength of national identification in Canada. Based upon the assumption that 1) change in the strength of national identification is indicated by changes in the characteristics of folk heroes and historical figures, and 2) the persons for whom public schools have been named constitute a set of folk heroes and historical figures, three specific hypotheses were formulated. It was hypothesized that, if national identification had increased over time, among those persons for whom public schools have been named: 1) the proportion of domestic figures would have increased, 2) the proportion of figures representing the British monarchy would have decreased, and 3) the proportion of non-Manitoban figures would have increased. These hypotheses were tested with data on school-naming events in the Winnipeg metropolitan area from 1881 to 1976. The first two hypotheses received some support, while the third was not confirmed. The findings suggest that, while change has occurred, it has involved only a negation of a previous basis of identification (Britain), and not an affirmation of identification with Canada itself.

Introduction

A basic problem facing any national society is the promotion among its members of a sense of identification with the nation. Canada is one modern society which has been characterized as having a relatively low level of national identification. Strong regional loyalties, the linguistic cleavage between English and French Canadians, and the influence exerted by American culture and institutional structures are factors which have been cited as obstacles to the development of a strong sense of national identification (Hiller, 1976: 158–160). An additional factor impeding the growth of national identification has been the maintenance of political ties with Britain, with the consequence that throughout most of Canada’s existence as a nation the symbols which could serve to elicit identification with the nation, for instance, a flag, have been related to the British monarchy (Lipset,
GOLDSTEIN
1964:184; Morton, 1972:85, 111). Since for many years these symbols were not distinctively Canadian, they did not promote identification with Canada in its own right.

While Canadian national identification is seen as weak in comparison with that of other industrialized societies, developments since the end of World War II have been viewed by some sociologists as evidence that such identification has begun to grow stronger (see, for example, Vallee and Whyte, 1968:839–840; Truman, 1971:524; and Hiller, 1976:155). These developments included the adoption of a Canadian flag and national anthem in the 1960s (although the latter is still unofficial), and increased public debate over the role, if any, that the monarchy should play in Canada. While such events signified a change in the symbolic basis for national identification at the federal government level, there is little other empirical evidence cited which provides a broader historical perspective from which to assess the claim that identification has grown stronger.

Recent sociological surveys which have provided information on the strength of national identification (for example, Taylor et al., 1972; Lamy, 1975) are, by virtue of their cross-sectional designs, unable to reveal whether change has occurred. Schwartz’s (1967) study of changes in Canadian identity, which made use of public opinion poll results from the 1940s to the mid-1960s, revealed that support for adopting distinctively Canadian national symbols increased during those decades. However, since opinion polling did not begin until the 1940s, it was not possible for Schwartz to extend her analysis to gain a broader perspective on changes over time.

If one wishes to gather evidence which can be used to assess whether Canadian national identification has changed over a large span of time, it is necessary to employ an approach which does not rely upon attitude surveys. An approach suggested by the literature would make use of information concerning the folk heroes and historical figures of a group. Doob (1964) devotes attention to the important role which heroes and historical figures can play in giving rise to national consciousness or identification. He notes (Doob, 1964) that:

Among the ancestors or predecessors who receive homage and thus help to keep the present-day nation united are heroes. These great men of long ago... include the founders of the country and leaders who have been particularly outstanding in fields of religion, fighting, or governing. Often, too, there are folk heroes, ordinary men — and women — whose status in the society was once not high but whose accomplishments are now considered to be extraordinary.

Doob (1964:240) also observes that the attributes of these heroes vary from society to society, and from epoch to epoch within the same society, with such variations presumably reflecting differences
or changes in social values and attitudes, as well as the occurrence of major events such as wars and revolutions.

On the basis of impressionistic evidence, Forcese and Richer (1975:27–28) and Schwartz have pointed to the paucity of such national heroes as an indication of the weakness of national identification in Canada. Schwartz (1967:44) describes the situation in the following way:

Although Canadian history seems short, it is certainly lengthy enough to have acquired historical heroes and dates of important events. But, lacking a revolutionary tradition, Canada has none of the dramatic heroes or historical occasions that are commemorated by other peoples. Politicians in Canada... have been, where successful, experts at compromise, and as such they are often considered rather colourless individuals. National heroes inherited from earlier periods are marked by their divisive potential.

It can be argued that a quantitative examination of selected attributes of persons perceived as folk heroes or important historical figures in different eras provides evidence relevant to the issue of change in the strength of national identification. Two questions immediately arise. The first is, how does one select a sample of folk heroes and historical figures from different eras to analyze? The second is, what attributes of these persons would be relevant to an assessment of change in the strength of national identification?

In selecting a sample of folk heroes and historical figures, the writer decided to use those persons who had been honoured by having a public school named after them in a large metropolitan area. The rationale for selecting a sample in this manner was the important role which public schools have played in the socialization process. Public schools transmit both current conventional values (including those attached to nationhood) as well as knowledge of the accomplishments of previous generations. It was assumed, therefore, that the persons for whom schools had been named would be those who were perceived as consistent with such values and/or providing a sense of history to students. Thus, such persons legitimately can be viewed as constituting a set of folk heroes and historical figures. Furthermore, the fact that school names were chosen by members of school boards who were elected by the public increases the likelihood that the persons selected would be acceptable in terms of prevailing attitudes and values of the community (or at least the dominant groups in the community). For these reasons it was deemed appropriate to use school names to provide a sample of folk heroes and historical figures which could be analyzed to gain insight into changes in social values which may have occurred over time.

In regard to the second question, if changes in the strength of national identification have occurred, evidence of this should be
indicated by changes in the attributes of folk heroes and historical figures. Three specific hypotheses were formulated concerning the kinds of changes which would be expected to have occurred if national identification had indeed grown stronger.

First, if national identification had increased, one would expect to find increased recognition of folk heroes and historical figures who have been directly involved in events which occurred in Canada. As noted previously, the replacement of national symbols derived from Canada’s ties with Britain with distinctively Canadian symbols has been taken as evidence of a growth in national identification. Following the same logic, a growth in national identification would presumably be accompanied by a tendency to look increasingly “inward” to Canada for persons who represent socially valued qualities and accomplishments, rather than “outward” to Britain. Accordingly, the first hypothesis was:

Hypothesis 1: Among those persons for whom schools have been named, the proportion who have been domestic figures has increased over time.

Second, it would follow that an increase in national identification would be accompanied by decreased recognition of representatives of the British monarchy, that is, members of the royal family and governors-general. If allegiance to the monarchy has played a central role in maintaining Canadian unity in the past (Morton, 1972:111), a growth of national identification would likely have the effect of shifting focus away from representatives of the monarchy as historical figures and folk heroes. Stated formally, the second hypothesis was:

Hypothesis 2: Among those persons for whom schools have been named, the proportion who have been representatives of the British monarchy has decreased over time.

Doob (1964:250–251) has commented that no society of any size is ever completely unified; rivalries of varying intensity exist between subgroups, including geographic regions. In Canada, regional and provincial loyalties have stood as obstacles to national identification (Hiller, 1976:38–40). While regional and national identification are not mutually exclusive, a tendency to recognize local folk heroes and historical figures exclusively would be indicative of a weak sense of national identification. Conversely, an increased recognition of the accomplishments of domestic figures who were not from the local area would be indicative of a growing identification with the nation. Following this line of reasoning, the third hypothesis formulated was:

Hypothesis 3: Among those domestic figures for whom schools have been named, the proportion who are non-local has increased over time.
Data Collection

The three hypotheses were tested using data on the names of public elementary and secondary schools in the Winnipeg metropolitan area (the city of Winnipeg and surrounding suburban communities). As one of the largest metropolitan areas in Canada, Winnipeg provides a relatively large number of cases for analysis in a concentrated geographic area, thus facilitating the collection of data. In addition, since the public system of education in Manitoba began in 1871, only four years after Canada attained nationhood, data on schools in Winnipeg cover a large portion of Canada's existence as a nation, and thus permit an assessment of long-term trends in national identification.

The basic unit of analysis in this study was the school-naming event. A school-naming event was each occasion upon which a public school was originally named or had its name changed. An initial list of school-naming events which involved persons was compiled from the records of the eleven school divisions which administer public schools located in the Winnipeg metropolitan area, from secondary sources which dealt with the history of specific school divisions, and from personal and telephone interviews with past and present school-board members and school-division personnel.

Deleted from this initial list were those naming events which involved persons only in an indirect fashion. A school indirectly named for a person was one which took its name from its location, for instance, the street on which the school was built, and it was the location which had been named after the person. A complication was introduced by the fact that some schools had had an addition constructed, with the original building and the addition subsequently being identified with a name and a number (King Edward No. 1 and King Edward No. 2). In these cases, the naming of the addition was not included in the list. Also not treated as a naming event was the immediate transferring of a school name from one building to another which had been built to replace it. However, in three school divisions, schools which had been named after persons were closed (or transferred to another division), and at a later time (9 years in one case, 27 years in another, and 48 years in the third) new schools built in these divisions were again named after the same persons. In each of these three cases, because of the time interval separating them, both the naming of the original school and the subsequent re-use of the name for a new school were considered as legitimate naming events, and were included in the list.

The final list of school-naming events involving persons which had occurred in the Winnipeg metropolitan area consisted of 141 cases, or 53 per cent of the total such events identified during the
period 1871–1976. These 141 cases represented 133 different persons. Each of the 141 naming events was categorized according to whether or not the person was a domestic figure, whether the person was a representative of the British monarchy, and whether or not the person was involved in local (Manitoba) history. The information used to make these categorizations was gathered from a variety of sources including standard biographical reference works; biographies compiled by school divisions; histories of school divisions, the city of Winnipeg, and the province of Manitoba; and interviews with school-board members, school-division personnel, and school principals.

Since the primary focus of the study was the determination of whether there had been a change in the strength of national identification over time, it was necessary to assign a date to each naming event. Two alternative means of doing this were considered. The first based the date of the event on the year in which the decision on the name of a school was made by the school board. The second based the date on the year in which the name was actually adopted. Due to incomplete records, it was not possible to ascertain the year in which decisions were made for all 141 events. Since the year in which each name was adopted could be established for 140 of the 141 naming events, the second alternative was employed.

**TABLE 1**

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL-NAMING EVENTS IN WINNIPEG METROPOLITAN AREA WHICH INVOLVED PERSONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870–79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880–89</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890–99</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900–09</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910–19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920–29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930–39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940–49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950–59</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960–69</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970–76</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|      | 141 | 100.0* |

*Percentages do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

The distribution of the naming events by decade is shown in Table 1. Although the provincial school system began in 1871, it was not until 1881 that the first school was named after a person. The num-
ber of naming events increased from six in the 1880s to 21 in the 1920s. The Depression and World War II brought school construction to a virtual standstill in the Winnipeg area. No naming events involving persons occurred in the 1930s, and only three occurred in the 1940s. The post-war baby boom and the growth of suburban areas led to the construction of many new schools. This is reflected in the fact that 32 naming events occurred in the 1950s and 30 in the 1960s. From 1970 to 1976 (the last year dealt with in this study), there were nine naming events.

Because of the small number (or absence) of naming events in some decades, the data were condensed within three time periods of approximately 30 years each. The first period was from 1881 (the first year in which a school was named after a person) to 1914 (the beginning of World War I). During these 34 years, 38 naming events (27 per cent of the total events being considered) occurred. The second period was from 1915 to 1945, a period spanning the First World War, the Depression, and World War II. Twenty-nine naming events (21 per cent of the total) occurred in these 31 years. The third period, also of 31 years, was from 1946 to 1976, and included 72 naming events (51 per cent of the total).

Findings

The first hypothesis stated that among those persons for whom schools had been named, the proportion who have been domestic figures had increased. A domestic figure was defined as a person of Canadian origin or a person whose activities took place in Canada (regardless of their nationality). Using this definition, a governor-general who was a British citizen would be classified as a domestic figure because his activities occurred in Canada. Similarly, a British or French general who led troops on Canadian soil would be considered a domestic figure. On the other hand, a member of the British royal family or a British prime minister would be classified as a foreign figure because his/her activities did not occur in Canada. This definition was intended to facilitate the differentiation of persons who had played a direct role in Canadian events from those who had not.

As can be seen in Table 2, of the 141 naming events occurring in Winnipeg from 1881 to 1976, an overwhelming majority (116 or 82 per cent) involved domestic figures. All 25 of the foreign figures were British. While domestic figures predominate overall, the proportion of such figures has varied between the three time periods being considered. In the era preceding World War I, 80 per cent of the 39 events involved domestic figures. During the years 1915–1945, the proportion of domestic figures declined to 62 per cent. Of the eleven naming events which involved foreign figures during this period, ten occurred between 1915 and 1922, the years during and immedi-
TABLE 2

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF NAMING EVENTS IN WINNIPEG METROPOLITAN AREA INVOLVING FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC FIGURES DURING THREE TIME PERIODS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Figure</th>
<th>1881–1914</th>
<th>1915–1945</th>
<th>1946–1976</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes one case for which date could not be established.

ately after World War I. The concentration of naming events involving foreign (British) figures in these particular years may reflect a heightened awareness of the ties with Britain and increased pro-British sentiments brought about by Canada’s participation with Britain in the war.

In the period following World War II, the proportion of naming events which involved domestic figures rose to 92 per cent. Even though more naming events occurred in this period than in either of the preceding ones, fewer foreign figures (only six) had schools named after them in this period. There was no concentration of the naming events which involved foreign figures in the years immediately following the end of World War II. This stands in contrast to the situation observed at the end of the First World War. Furthermore, an examination of the naming events occurring from the 1950s onward revealed a clear trend of increasing recognition of domestic figures. In the 1950s, 88 per cent of the naming events (28 of 32) involved domestic figures; in the 1960s, this increased to 93 per cent (28 of 30), and increased again to 100 per cent (9 of 9 events) in 1970–1976.

The data in Table 2 provide support for the first hypothesis by indicating that there was greater recognition of persons who had played a direct role in events in Canada in the era following World War II than in previous eras. The observed decline in the proportion of foreign folk heroes and historic figures in the period after the Second World War is consistent with the proposition that national identification has grown stronger.

The second hypothesis stated that, among those persons for whom schools had been named, the proportion who were representatives of the British monarchy had declined over time. In Table 3, the naming events in each time period which involved members of the British royal family or governors-general are shown. From 1881 to 1976, 22 (or 16 per cent) of the 141 naming events involved such figures.
Of these 22 events, slightly more than half (12 or 54 per cent) involved members of the royal family. In terms of the three time periods, it can be seen that 18 per cent of the naming events in the period from 1881–1914 involved representatives of the monarchy. This percentage rose to 24 per cent in the following period, and then dropped to 11 per cent in the years after World War II. Thus, proportionately fewer naming events involved representatives of the monarchy in the post-war era than in either previous period. However, it is also apparent from Table 3 that the major difference between the three time periods was in the proportion of events involving members of the royal family, and not governors-general.

The decline in the proportion of naming events involving members of the royal family is consistent with the second hypothesis. The absence of a similar decline in the case of governors-general, however, would seem to be inconsistent with an increase in national identification and would suggest that there continues to be a desire to recognize Canada’s link with the British monarchy (see, for example, Manzer, 1974:152–154). One interpretation of the findings in Table 3 is that the way in which this linkage is recognized has changed since the end of World War II. It may be noted from Table 3 that in the first two time periods a majority of the representatives of the monarchy were members of the royal family itself, and a minority were governors-general. In the post-war era, the opposite was true. This change is not entirely inconsistent with an increase in national identification, for it indicates that since the end of World War II, when recognition is given to the monarchy, it is primarily through persons who have represented this institution in Canada. It should also be noted that prior to 1952 the position of governor-general had been filled by British citizens. Since 1952, all governors-general have been Canadian.

### TABLE 3

**NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL NAMING EVENTS WHICH INVOLVED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MONARCHY IN THREE TIME PERIODS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member of Royal Family</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor-General</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Total N of Naming Events) (39) (29) (72) (141)*

* Includes one case for which a date could not be established.
citizens. Of the five naming events in the post-war era which involved governors-general, four occurred after 1952. Two of these four involved Canadians, Vincent Massey and Georges Vanier, who served in this position. The naming of schools for these persons may be viewed as recognizing the accomplishments of important Canadians as well as the monarchy they represented.5

The second hypothesis received direct support in that there was a decline in the proportion of naming events involving members of the royal family in the period 1946–1976. Indirect support came from the observation that the “mix” of representatives of the monarchy changed from a preponderance of members of the royal family in the earlier periods to a preponderance of governors-general in the post-war era. On balance, these findings can be viewed as additional evidence that national identification has grown stronger.

The third hypothesis regarding changes in the characteristics of folk heroes and historical figures stated that, among those domestic figures for whom schools had been named, the proportion of non-local figures had increased. Since this hypothesis dealt with only those persons who had been directly involved in events in Canada, the 25 occasions on which schools had been named for foreign figures were excluded from this portion of the analysis. The remaining 116 naming events were defined as involving local figures if the person had been a resident of Manitoba or a non-resident who had been directly involved in activities in the province.6 Non-local figures were those who had no direct involvement in activities in Manitoba. To facilitate the discussion of findings, non-local figures were divided into the sub-categories of governors-general and others.

As Table 4 shows, of the total of 116 naming events under con-

| TABLE 4 |
| NAMING EVENTS INVOLVING LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL FIGURES DURING THREE PERIODS (DOMESTIC FIGURES ONLY) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Figure</th>
<th>1881–1914</th>
<th></th>
<th>1915–1945</th>
<th></th>
<th>1946–1976</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>97*</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Local</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor-General</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes one case for which a date could not be established.
sideration from 1881 to 1976, 97 (84 per cent) involved local figures. Of the 19 non-local figures, slightly over one-half (10 or 53 per cent) were governors-general, leaving only nine non-local figures in other fields of endeavour who had had a school named after them during the 96 years being examined. The overall impression gained from Table 4 is that regional identification has been strong in the Winnipeg metropolitan area. This impression is reinforced when one considers the fact that five of the ten events involving governors-general, and eight of the nine naming events which involved other non-local figures occurred in the single school division encompassing Winnipeg city proper. Outside this division, non-local figures other than governors-general have been virtually ignored as folk heroes and historical figures.

A comparison of the three time periods indicates, contrary to the third hypothesis, that there has not been an increase in the proportion of non-local figures over time. In the period 1881–1914, 16 per cent of the domestic figures were non-local, in the following era, the proportion rose to 33 per cent, and in 1946–76 it declined to only 12 per cent. Relatively more naming events involving non-local figures occurred in the years during and immediately after World War I than in any other comparable span of time. This bears out Morton's (1967:359) view that: “The war had recalled the province to a sense of its being part of the Canadian nation.” It will be recalled that the proportion of naming events involving foreign figures also was highest during and after World War I. These findings suggest that Canada's participation in World War I had the general effect of shifting focus away from the local area.

To test the possibility that the overall results for the period after World War II may have masked an increased recognition of non-local figures in recent years, the naming events from 1950 onward were examined by decade. This analysis showed that in the 1950s 18 per cent of 28 events involved non-local figures; in the 1960s the proportion of non-local figures was only 7 per cent (2 of 28 events); and in 1970–76 none of the nine events involved non-local figures. The clear trend from 1950 onward is one of decreasing recognition of non-local personalities.

As noted previously, ten of the non-local figures for whom schools had been named in the Winnipeg metropolitan area were governors-general. Of the other non-local figures, four played roles in wars
(Montcalm, Wolfe, Brock, and Secord), four were colonists or explorers (Champlain, Frontenac, Franklin, and Thompson), and one was a medical doctor (Osler). It is significant that while two British prime ministers (Gladstone and Churchill), three provincial premiers (Greenway, H. MacDonald and Norquay), and a number of municipal politicians have had schools named after them, not one Canadian prime minister has been similarly honoured. Perhaps this finding demonstrates the validity of Schwartz's (1967) remark that Canadian politicians (at least national leaders) have been considered rather colourless figures. In addition, it could be argued that, since the federal government is the institution which directly symbolizes Canada's existence as a nation, a strong sense of national identification would lead to the honorific recognition of one or more relatively “colourful” prime ministers at some point in time. The complete absence of any federal leaders from this sample of folk heroes could therefore also be an indication that national identification itself has been weak.

Discussion

The results of this study have furnished only partial support for the proposition that there has been an increase in the strength of national identification in Canada. Interpretation of these results is facilitated if the development of national identification in formerly colonial societies is conceptualized as consisting of two analytically distinct processes. The first process is the negation of identification with the metropolitan society, and is indicated by a rejection of folk heroes and historical figures from the metropolis. The second process is the affirmation of identification with the new nation itself, and is indicated by the emergence of a set of new national heroes and historical figures. On the basis of this distinction, change in the strength of national identification has occurred in the Winnipeg metropolitan area since the end of the Second World War, but only in regard to the process of negation. There was no evidence of change involving the process of affirmation during the post-war era, nor was there evidence that such change was likely to be forthcoming.

Given that this study has dealt with a single metropolitan area in western Canada, whose ethnic composition is very different from that of eastern Canada, and given the absence of comparable data from other areas, it would be inappropriate to generalize these findings to the society as a whole. However, when the results reported here are considered along with contemporary evidence which indicates that Canadian students name Americans rather than Canadians as their heroes (Manzer, 1974:150–151), that English and French Canadians tend to identify with Canadian heroes from their own ethnic groups (Richert, 1974), and that public schools place much greater emphasis in their social-science curricula upon provincial and regional concerns than upon national concerns (Hodgetts, 1968), it
seems unlikely that a set of national folk heroes and historical figures will emerge in the foreseeable future. An absence of such heroes, in conjunction with the other obstacles to national identification mentioned at the beginning of this paper, suggests that the “problem” of national identification will persist for some time to come.

NOTES
1 The singular form “person” is used throughout the remainder of this paper for reasons of verbal economy. In actuality, nine of the naming events involved families rather than individuals. In these nine cases, the characteristics of the family head or the most prominent member were used in the analysis.
2 The foreign figures (with the year of the naming event) were: Queen Victoria (1897), Prince Albert (1897), William Gladstone (1899), Princess Alexandra (1902), King Edward VII (1908), Cecil Rhodes (1909), Lord Roberts (1911), and Lord Kelvin (1912).
3 The foreign figures were: Lord Kitchener (1915), King George V (1915 and 1916), Lord Nelson (1917), Florence Nightingale (1920), Prince Edward (1920), Isaac Newton (1921), David Livingstone (1922), and Queen Elizabeth I (1940).
4 The foreign figures were: Lord Mountbatten (1949), Princess Elizabeth (1950), Princess Margaret (1955), Winston Churchill (1955), Prince Charles (1961), and Robert Browning (1963).
5 As noted, all governors-general from 1952 to the present have been Canadian citizens. Until the appointment of Edward Schreyer in 1979, however, all Canadian governors-general have been of British or French ethnic origin and all have been from eastern Canada. The utility of the position of governor-general as a symbol for national identification would seem to be enhanced by the fact that the new Governor-General is not only a western Canadian, but is also a member of one of the “other” ethnic groups (German-Canadian).
6 Some of the individuals categorized as local figures were also involved in activities outside Manitoba (Louis Riel, La Verendrye, Pierre Radisson, and J.S. Woodsworth). It should not be inferred that local figures were associated with Manitoba history exclusively. Persons categorized as local figures could conceivably serve as symbols for national identification if they were given recognition in other parts of Canada. In order to establish this, it would be necessary to examine school-naming events in other regions. This goes beyond the scope of the present study.
7 The school division which encompasses the city of Winnipeg proper has been the largest in the metropolitan area. Thirty-six per cent of all naming events involving Canadian figures occurred in this division. However, of the events involving non-local figures, a disproportionately large percentage (68 per cent) occurred in this division.
8 The non-local figures were: Duke of Argyle (1881), Lord Dufferin (1881), Lord Aberdeen (1909), Laura Secord (1912), General Isaac Brock (1913), Earl Grey (1915), Samuel de Champlain (1920), General Montcalm (1920), General Wolfe (1920), Sir John Franklin (1921), Lord Byng (1921), Viscount Alexander (1948), Lord Lansdowne (1954), William Osler (1955), David Thompson (1955), Louis Frontenac (1957), Vincent Massey (1959), Georges Vanier (1962), and Earl of Athlone (1965).

REFERENCES


Letter from Bishop Alexandre Taché to his Mother, Concerning his Life with the Chipewyan Nation

Translated by
Father Gaston Carrière, O.M.I., C.M.
Archives Deschâtelets, Ottawa

Editor's Introduction

Alexandre Antonin Taché, the first Canadian Oblate to work in the missions of the North West, was born on July 23, 1823 and joined the Oblates in 1844. He left for Red River on June 24, 1845, and was ordained a priest in St. Boniface on October 12, 1845. He was sent to Ile à la Crosse in 1846 and remained there until 1850, when he was summoned to return to Red River to be appointed coadjutor to Bishop Norbert Provencher. He reached St. Boniface on July 4, 1851 and then went to France where he was consecrated as Bishop in Viviers on November 23, 1851. He returned to Ile à la Crosse in 1852 and stayed until after the death of Bishop Provencher in 1853. He left the mission in 1854 and went to St. Boniface to carry out his duties as Bishop.

This letter to his mother, dated January 4, 1851, has been published in French on several occasions, but we believe that this is the first time it has been published in English. Taché's interpretation of the Chipewyan nation, we believe, is of considerable interest, and Prairie Forum will publish in its next issue a paper by Father Carrière which discusses in a more general way the missionary efforts of the Oblates in the North West.

It must be noted that when Bishop Taché wrote this letter he was only 27, but had clearly already gained a valuable insight into the Chipewyan nation. It appears from his later writings that his ideas on the Chipewyans were never substantially altered.

THE LETTER

St. Jean-Baptiste Mission, Ile à la Crosse,
January 4, 1851

My good and loving mother,

You have often asked me for a detailed account of the nation I have been sent to evangelize. In spite of the great pleasure I would have derived from satisfying your request sooner, nevertheless I thought it better to wait. If one has to live with a person for a long time...
in order to know him well, this is even more necessary in the case of a people. It seems impossible to me to form within a few months an exact idea about a nation, to understand its character, its ideas and manners, and to become familiar with its customs and habits. The difficulty is even greater when we are speaking about a tribe whose language we are ignorant of, and which has never been understood by someone able to give a sound and considered opinion of it. This is why many of those who have written about the Indian peoples have, in my opinion, failed to reach the goal every writer should set for himself: to describe persons and things with accuracy. Some, forgetting all too easily the cruel scenes of which civilized people only too often offer an atrocious example, see nothing more in the Savages than monsters in human form who, accustomed to hunt wild beasts, have adopted the instincts and ferocity of their quarry. Others, at the opposite extreme, astonished to find these people exempt from the ambitions aroused by the demands of civilized life, persist in discovering in them the traces of the bliss enjoyed by man in his primitive state, of which one sees glimpses in the tranquil life of the patriarchs. In their poetic descriptions both groups present the inhabitants of the woods as an ideal people which does not exist in reality. I must avow to you something which perhaps will not plead very much in favour of my judgement, but which will at least be very true. Yes, I must admit that on my arrival among the Savages, I laboured under a profound delusion concerning them. My head was somewhat stuffed with the elegant descriptions and loving sympathies of the illustrious author of Atala, and some other ideas, and then. I expected something altogether different from what I found, and was truly astonished. Indeed, I could hardly believe my eyes. So much so that, having left Canada with the determination and the formal promise to write to you often and at length on the Savages, I withdrew my promise and said to myself: since one writes only to hide the truth, I shall not write. I could not pretend to do better than so many others more capable than myself. This is why I have kept silent for so long about the Indians in the numerous letters I have sent to satisfy your love and mine. Today, however, I bow to your pressing requests. I approach the matter with some reluctance, because I know how arduous and difficult it is. This letter, like the others, is written for the sole purpose of pleasing you and the small circle of relatives and friends who may happen to see it. I have but one objective, to be truthful.

The vast territory of the Hudson's Bay Company, including that of the North-West Company, is populated by four great families of Savages, quite distinct from one another, but whose various respective tribes show resemblances too striking to allow us to deny their affinity. Each of these families occupies a territorial zone, somewhat oblique, from the northwest to the southeast, and whose starting point is the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Firstly, to the south,
along the border of the United States, we find the Blackfoot, the Assiniboine, the Sioux, who seem to me of the same origin as the Iroquois with whom they share a warlike mien and a certain nobility of soul too often similar to cruelty. Secondly, upwards, between 50 and 56 degrees of latitude North, live the great Cree nation and the Saulteaux who, at the eastward extension of their zone, come in contact with the Algonkians and other tribes of Canadian Savages which have a similar language, suggesting unity of origin. Thirdly, on the shores of the Arctic Ocean, as on the coasts of Labrador, are the Eskimos, who are not found south of Churchill, at 59 degrees of latitude North and 94 degrees of longitude West. They do not come further south doubtless in fear of not finding the ice thick enough to pitch their dwellings, nor a temperature cold enough to satisfy their habits. These Eskimos, who live exclusively along the coast, almost run over into the lands of the Crees, leaving between their territory and that of the latter a triangular space, whose base is at the foot of the great [mountain] chain, from the 67th degree of latitude North down to the 56th, and whose vertex is at Churchill, the location of which I have already mentioned. Fourthly, this immense tract of country is inhabited by a fourth great family, which alone will be the object of this letter. Not satisfied to live on the eastern side of the great mountains, this nation also occupies the crests and even extends over the western slope, almost to the Pacific Ocean. The numerous tribes beyond the mountains seem to show differences from those on this side too marked to allow them to be considered of the same nation, but a more precise study will soon show that these differences are due solely to the circumstances in which these various tribes find themselves. Besides, the unity of language solves the whole question. Be that as it may, I intend to speak to you today only of those who are in the diocese I live in and who are so much alike that one can say with some accuracy: *Ab uno disce omnes.*

These various tribes are those of the Chipewyan, Caribou Eaters, Beavers, Sarcees, Dogribs, Yellowknives, Slaves, Hares and finally the Loucheux or Quarelleurs. The nation has no particular name; I will nevertheless call it after the tribe among which I live and whose members modestly translate their name by the word “people” (*Dene*). I fail to understand why our Canadians call it Montagnais, since the tribe which bears that name is precisely the farthest from the mountain chain, and there is not one important mountain in the territory it occupies. The English have adopted the name which the Crees gave them, the word *Tchipeweyan*, the etymology of which I think is to be found in the two words *Tchipaw* (pointed) and *Weyan* (skin). The reason for this etymology would come from the fact that the Chipewyans, in the past, did not live so far south; finding no birch bark, they were forced to build their canoes with skins. Moreover, then as now, these canoes were very slim, and seeing them the Crees
may have said: *Tchipaw-veyan-oji* (pointed skin-canoe), and later *Oji* (canoe) *Tchipaw-veyan* or *Tchipeweyan*.

Distinguished scholars have unhesitatingly affirmed that all the natives of America are perfectly alike, with the exception of the Eskimos. This assertion may be true for the nations I do not know, but I think I can affirm, without temerity, that another exception is necessary for the nation I am speaking to you about. Its manners, its inclinations, many of its practices, its language and also its external profile would seem to indicate that it belongs to a stock different from the one which it is generally considered to come from. The Chipewyan nation is certainly one of the least known in America. Those who have spoken of it have done as they have for many other things: they judged it merely to be a part [of another nation], but as it has no resemblance to its neighbours, this judgment is therefore totally false. What Sir [Alexander] Mackenzie says is quite correct, but it is to be regretted that this intrepid traveler kept himself within such restricted limits while speaking of a people who deserve to be better known.

The confines of a letter will not allow me to describe the nation to you as fully as I would like to; I can outline only its principal characteristics. A word, at least, on the threefold situation of these Savages, at the time of the arrival of the missionaries, to give an idea of their intellectual, moral and physical needs.

1. *Intellectual situation.* — Those who pretend to the dubious honour of being nothing more than Orang-outangs, better combed and better shaved than their ancestors, would surely honour me with a smile of pity if they heard me speak of the intellectual state of Savages who, according to them, are at best monkeys or baboons. As for me, I see in these children of the woods only members of the great family whose chief was created “in the image and likeness” of the Supreme Intellect. Therefore our Chipewyans are intelligent. It is not necessary to do a lengthy study to become convinced of this fact: the ease with which they learn things of which they have never had the slightest idea proves that nature was as generous towards them as towards other peoples. It is true that we do not find among them those extraordinary geniuses who often owe their brilliance simply to the situation in which they find themselves; on the other hand, extreme mediocrities are no more common than elsewhere. All are endowed with an average share of intelligence.

The first use a man must make of his reason is, without doubt, to raise himself to the knowledge of his Maker: “Give me intelligence,” says the Prophet, “and I will apply myself to the knowledge of thy law.” Thus, our Chipewyans, without any other light than that of their own reason, came to the knowledge of God without that stupid combination of absurdities which captivated the most enlightened
peoples of antiquity. They believed in only one God, the creator and
guardian of all; a re overshield of virtue and avenger of crime; and an
eternal God whose providential care extends to all that exists. However,
little accustomed to purely spiritual ideas, they imagined that
God assumed a human form, whose gigantic proportions corre-
sponded to his absolute power, and the perfection of whose organs
allowed him to see and hear from heaven all that was done and said
on Earth. This notion of divinity seems to me the most exact that any
people deprived of the immense benefit of the Revelation has ever
had. Our Savages had acquired this idea from the contemplation of
nature.

"The heavens narrate the glory of God": how, in their admirable
language, could they fail to speak to the intellect of Whom they are
the only shelter? The great book of creation is written in such promi-
nent and such bright characters that the child of the woods can read
it. Thus the contemplation of the sky, with the marvels of its worlds,
the observation of the earth, the silent majesty of the forests, lead
invariably to the knowledge of the divine architect whose grand design
gave birth to so many wonders. A great perversity is required in the
vicerey of creation to forget the sovereign who, by an unceasing
miracle of goodness, provides "daily bread" even to those who cannot
foresee its need. Our Chipewyans had not associated with the madman
who has said in his heart, "there is no God." On the contrary, every
leaf of the forest, every blade of grass on the prairie, every drop of
water in the lakes, every one of the numerous inhabitants of the waters,
the air and the earth repeated for them one of the letters forming the
names of "Creator" (Ni-ottsi) and "powerful" (yeddariye) which they
gave to God.

It is surprising that with these ideas of divinity, the Chipewyans
had no special form of worship and no religious ceremonies what-
soever. Only during meetings, above all while feasting, one of the old
men would exhort the assembly to recognize God’s beneficence and
to avoid the evil which alone can stop the flow of the All-Powerful’s
gifts. Then would follow a fervent prayer for health, success to the
hunt, and other necessities of life. Then some mouthfuls of the food
to be offered to the guests were thrown into the fire and buried under
the fireplace. Some more considerable sacrifices also took place, but
so infrequently that one could say that this is not common practice.
This is absolutely all the public show of worship rendered to the
Divinity by this nation. However, one finds some traces of magic,14
but they can be thought to be of foreign origin; indeed, they were
nothing more than prayers, accompanied by more noise than the
others. The magicians had, without doubt, the aura of passing for
extraordinary men, but they addressed themselves exclusively to
God, and these superstitions never had the regrettable results which
occurred all too often among the neighbouring peoples. Private worship was quite universal. Some persons prayed to God fervently every day; others did so only in critical circumstances. I have heard several accounts of how the prayers of these simple souls were answered by Him who said: “Ask and you shall receive.” Here is one instance among many. One day, I was looking at the hand of an old man who had lost his thumb. Noticing my attention, he told me in a tone of conviction which touched me strongly: “See this hand. One winter day I was out hunting, far from my hut. It was cold. I was walking. Suddenly I saw caribou. I went closer to them and shot, but my gun exploded and blew off my thumb. I had already lost a great amount of blood. I was trying in vain to stop the bleeding. I was slowly getting cold. I tried to kindle a fire, but it was impossible. Then I became afraid of death; but remembering about Him whom you call God and whom I did not know well, I said to Him: ‘Grandfather (Sëttiye), it is said that you can do everything; look upon me, and since you are the Powerful, comfort me.’ Suddenly, no more blood; this allowed me to put on my mitten. I managed to get back to my hut, where I dropped with exhaustion upon entering. Then I understood,” he added with profound emotion, “then I understood the strength of the Powerful. From that moment, I have always desired to know Him. That is why, having learned that you were here, I came from a very long way so that you might teach me how to serve Him who saved me at that time and who alone makes us all live.”

Without having read St. Paul, our Savages believed in “a multitude of evil spirits, scattered in the air,” enemies of God and men; always at war with God, against whom they sometimes prevailed, and using their power only to harm man. They attributed to these evil spirits all their failures and illnesses, and especially death when it arrived before old age. They believed that these spirits were born only after the flood; and moreover that they had a very close relationship with those animals which are enemies of man or which, like serpents, inspire him with horror. Hence an extreme care to say nothing against these animals, for fear of provoking their anger. Although the word “blasphemy” is found in their language, this crime, so common among Christians, was unknown among them. They believed that imprecations against divinity could only add to their difficulties.

Although extremely limited in their historical knowledge, our Savages had nevertheless retained an awareness of some of the important events in the history of mankind. Besides a vague legend of the creation and fall of man through woman, their tradition agrees with the account of Moses, saying in the same words: “There were giants on the Earth”; “the waters flooded everything and covered all the surface of the Earth”; mankind was scattered “then through all the regions of the world”; “fire fell from heaven” and burned the Earth.
In their history of the flood, they replace the ark by a small floating island on which four people, some animals and some birds found their salvation and escaped the general ruin. Such a tradition, found in the nineteenth century among an infidel people would, I suppose, stun the ignorant incredulity of the eighteenth-century philosophers.\textsuperscript{15}

You might be interested to learn the story of one of their tales which may appear ridiculous, but which seems to me to contain a strong proof supporting those who claim that America was populated by migrations from Asia. Here is the legend: At the time of the giants, one of them was walking on the shores of the great frozen lake (Arctic Ocean). He was so big that an ordinary man lodged in the thumb of his mitten, without bothering him at all. This giant met another giant and engaged him in hand-to-hand combat. Feeling that he was about to succumb in the fight, he told the little man in his mitten: “my little son, cut the legs of my adversary because he is stronger than I.” The little man obeyed, and the colossus fell backwards across the great lake, so that his head touched the other bank, forming a bridge on which the caribou crossed over to this side. Later, a woman attempted the same journey and succeeded after walking several days. She brought iron and copper and was well received by the Chipewyans, to whom she gave the iron. She made several more trips, but after being insulted by some men she sank into the ground and took all the iron with her. Since then, says the story, the migrations have come to an end. The Eskimos, who have the same tradition, contend that the caribou continue to cross to this side. The fact is that these animals sometimes disappear suddenly, and then reappear in equal or even greater numbers. Another fact, no less relevant, is that before the arrival of the Europeans among the Chipewyans, the latter had no metal utensils but they recall having lost the use of them in relatively recent times. They also explain by the fall of their giant their numerous unsuccessful efforts to discover the North-West Passage. This last statement shows clearly that the body of their giant is nothing but an ice bridge over which they once crossed. This woman’s trips would seem to indicate that migrations have taken place at different times and that, unable to explain why they ceased, they attributed it to her disappearance. Other traditions and explanations of the preceding story might perhaps be of interest, but I must remember that I am writing a letter and not a book. The principal fault of these stories lies in the lack of chronology; something which is not surprising in a people where every individual ignores his own age and that of his children.

Another proof of the intelligence of our Chipewyans would be found in their occupations and their way of satisfying the needs of life; but since all this is common to the other Savages of the country, I shall not pursue this point; I will simply make an observation I have
often made before. All the Indians are better naturalists, not only than our country people, but even than the most learned elements of our populations. They have been initiated into this knowledge since childhood. A 14-year-old Indian knows the names of all the animals, birds, fishes of his country, and also their instincts, food and habits. The smallest insect does not escape his watchful eye. I must humbly confess that I was often very glad to take refuge in my ignorance of their language to avoid explanations I would have been hard pressed to give in French. Our Chipewyans are not such good botanists as the other Indians; they know very little about the properties of plants, although they know their names and forms. In this, again, they are more knowledgeable than I. I hear you, good mother, giving me a gentle but well deserved reproach at this point. If, during my vacation as a school boy, instead of spending my time solely in frivolous amusements, I had heeded your wise advice and taken advantage of the botany lessons you wanted to give me, I would not have to blush today in seeing that I am more ignorant than a young Savage. Why should one have to become wise when regrets are the only remedy one can offer for one’s folly? You would not have much difficulty now in persuading me to become your student, if I had the opportunity.

Our Chipewyans have no knowledge whatsoever of the exact sciences; their language cannot express a number above the hundreds. The experimental sciences are also absolutely unknown to them. Their astronomical observations would not amaze the fathers of the science, but they are as good as those of the uneducated portion of our compatriots. The sun, the moon, the constellations of the Great Bear and Orion are their chronometers. Like so many others, they believe that the sun rotates daily around our planet, and that the latter, which they suppose motionless, is nothing less than spherical. Constantly exposed to the inclemency of the seasons, they know how to forecast the variations of the atmosphere and estimate air temperatures; nature serves as a barometer and a thermometer. One is often astonished to find them in accord with these instruments.

It might now be the time to say a word on the language of the Savages in general, and on Chipewyan in particular. I am well aware of the fact that the language in which a loving mother utters the first expression of her tenderness is always that which sounds most harmonious to the ear of man and which produces the sweetest impression on his heart. Hence the claims of so many people who always believe their maternal tongue preferable to all others. This feeling, however natural it may be, must not lead us to excessive overstatements. There really are some peculiar people. I have seen even educated people, otherwise endowed with sound judgment, decide ex cathedra that Indian languages say nothing; that without the help of signs the Indian could not communicate the few thoughts origi-
nating in his dull brain. And why such a statement? Very simply, because those who make it do not know a single word of these languages. What a beautiful reason! One should remember that if it is blasphemous to deny a holy truth because one does not understand it, it is also absurd to adopt the same attitude to truths of secondary importance. He who has given man the ability to perceive objects and to speak to himself through thought, has also given him the ability to communicate his ideas to his fellow men and to speak to them through language. This priceless gift, God gave to the Indians as to others, even if this is not altogether to the liking of those who claim the contrary. I would even go farther: there are some Indian dialects, such as Saulteaux, Cree and others, which, in many a situation, show a vitality, a variety and a clarity of expression which we certainly do not find in the European languages. This is due to the very character of these languages, which one can appreciate only after serious study and when familiarity allows one to exploit the wealth of expression which surprises both those who use them and those who hear them. I know that what I say here might seem ridiculous to many people, but it is nonetheless true. To those people, I will say, remember that the first condition for a reasonable statement is to know what one is talking about.

As for the language of our Chipewyans, I must confess that at first sight it appears to have little in its favour. One must have faith in what they are, to divine that they are expressing thoughts and feelings. It is impossible to imagine such a combination of bizarre, raucous and strange sounds; sudden interruptions in the middle of the words, excessive aspirates, gutturals equalled only by the accompanying sibilants, litanies of consonants, between which a few almost imperceptible vowels are lost: in a word, a system of pronunciation which provokes laughter from all those who hear it for the first time. Therein lies the great difficulty of the Chipewyan dialect, a difficulty almost insurmountable for a stranger, and which, up to now, has confounded the bravest. One finds documents on the other Indian languages; but none on this one, except for those we have prepared ourselves. We had to develop nearly twenty arbitrary signs to express sounds which cannot be conveyed by the possible combinations of our alphabet. This language is the object of my constant attention, and I might be tempted to speak of it at greater length; but as I know that grammatical aridities are not your favourite subject for study and that you have no intention of becoming a polyglot, I suppose that you will be grateful to me if I pass quickly over a topic of so little attraction. I will content myself by saying that this dialect also has its merits, that a Chipewyan woman knows very well how to tell her son that she loves him in a way that will be understood. Some of our new Christians pray and sing in their language with an expression of happiness which shows clearly that, though a stranger might find nothing but ridicule in it,
their hearts are moved in thinking about the sentiments they express.

2. Moral situation. — If our Chipewyans have so many reasons to envy civilized people from the intellectual point of view, one must admit that their moral condition, in the midst of the most profound ignorance, can offer a lesson of true wisdom to those who so criminally abuse their education. This is the bright side of the tribe. I know that all is far from being perfect here, especially when one judges according to the sublime teachings derived from the evangelical morality, but it is nonetheless true that their conduct constitutes an agreeable contrast with that of most infidel peoples. To say savage is to say ferocious and barbarian; in this respect our good Chipewyans are not Savages. There is probably no nation which more strongly abhors bloodshed and acts of violent cruelty. Murder is unknown among them and inspires an extreme aversion. Undoubtedly, the spirit of revenge is to be found whenever the divine teachings originating from the Cross do not suppress natural inclination; nevertheless the Chipewyans would be satisfied with token revenge. A few punches and a few bits of hair plucked from the head of their adversary would be sufficient compensation for the most bloody outrages. This is sufficient proof of their natural propensity for gentleness, even sometimes for cowardice. I think that the golden ages of chivalry, with their romantic adventures, would find few champions among our peaceful flock. We could perhaps make knights in shining armour out of them, but as for fearless knights, that would be impossible to hope for. They always imagine that their enemies are pursuing them relentlessly, so that it is not uncommon to see large numbers of them flee because a woman or a child thought she had heard a sound resembling the discharge of a gun, or even because some leaves of the forest appear to bear the footprint of a stranger. The Cree, with whom they have long been at war, do them the honour of recognizing that, although most careful to avoid combat, they were very brave when in action. I can easily believe it because they are of a serious and deliberate character, the kind of people not easily excited, but rather with a constant steadiness of their emotions. When one reproaches them for being panic-stricken, they excuse themselves by their aversion to murder, which is a horror undiminished even in the name of war. This reason, which may be true, is not understood by those who live with them, and they have a reputation of being cowards.

Oppression of the weak has always appeared to me to be a consequence of lack of nobility of character: so I was not surprised to find it among the Chipewyans. It is wretched to be submitted to their authority. I know of nothing more depressing than the lot of an orphan adopted by a stranger. In consequence, these miserable creatures keep, until an advanced age, an air of inferiority, often even of stupidity, which must be attributed to no other cause than the bad treatment
they received in childhood. This proves that while our Savages are not lacking in gentleness, they have little compassion. This flaw in their character shows clearly in their conduct towards their wives. It is painful to see that woman, who was created to be his companion and helper, has become instead the slave of man, who received superior physical strength to serve solely as protector and not as torturer. This last word is unfortunately only too appropriate, since I have seen men, so gentle with others, knock their wives senseless and constantly treat them with a harshness derived from barbarism. How often have I thanked God that my mother was not born the wife of a Chipewyan!! ... If anything could make me dislike them, it would surely be this fault. But I am happy to be able to tell you that religion, by its softening influence, is slowly succeeding in erasing the traces of this brutality. One singular thing, apparently incompatible with this lack of tenderness, is that they fall into the depths of despair at the death of a relative. On such an occasion everything would be sacrificed; even the most indispensable garments of the deceased would rarely be kept to clothe the living, or else they would be exchanged for the clothes of others. Endless and boundless weeping moved the most indifferent, and all those who witnessed a death set their hearts to express strongly a sorrow that the majority certainly did not feel. I have seen one of these scenes among people I had just started to instruct. I assure you that one would have needed a very unruffled composure not to be moved at the sight of the contortions and howlings of the father and mother of the deceased. The others, a little more educated, joined in my efforts to calm them.

I said that the Chipewyans had no feelings; I must make an exception in favour of fathers towards their children, of the women in general and especially the mothers. How often have I been touched by the sight of these unfortunate women, themselves overwhelmed with difficulties, lavishing upon the dirty little creatures the signs of the love which gave them life. There are certain general characteristics of humanity which are found everywhere; that of the woman in the exercise of her motherly duties offers something so profoundly characteristic that it is impossible not to discover it even among the most barbarian peoples. Unfortunately, here as in many other places, mothers are often rewarded for their tenderness only by the sorrow of being forgotten.

Here again, good mother, I would have to reproach myself a little. Although my heart gives me the consoling testimony that I have always loved you most tenderly, nevertheless I know that, through my thoughtlessness, I have more than once grieved the one who cared only for my happiness. Pardon me, I beseech you, for faults which were much more the consequence of youthful levity than of malice of heart. I am paying today, by the sorrow of being far from
the best of mothers, for the crime of not having understood soon enough all the tenderness of her love. With this feeling in mind, I try to soften the lot of many unfortunate mothers, and to inspire with filial piety those who for so long have disregarded these sacred obligations. The mother here had no authority over her children, especially the boys; they saw her occupied daily in the most difficult chores without even thinking of helping her. The father had authority as long as his physical strength gave him superiority; but if old age or some accident had deprived him of this advantage, he lost all his influence; he, in his turn, had to obey the son who undertook to support him. This authority of the father, limited though it is, is the only one known to the Chipewyans. This people is essentially republican and we can apply to it, in all truth, what the Holy Books say of the Jewish people at certain times of their history: “At that time, there was no king... but everyone acted as he pleased.”

Although we are certainly far from the scenes of the great political upheavals, nevertheless, some letters, with too few items of news, and some fragments of newspapers lead us to believe that modern society is undermined by an unrestrained desire for liberty. I do not think, however, that the most fervent advocates of power for the people ever dreamt of as complete a democracy as that which the Chipewyan nation enjoys. One must admit that such an order of things would not suit the all too obvious ambitions concealed under the apparent devotion of the free-thinkers. Although authority seems to me to be the inborn guardian of order, nevertheless I would consent to see peoples do away with the various levels of society, under the condition however that this levelling would also take place in the hearts of the different members of these societies, thereby silencing all those ambitions and vicious tendencies which, if not bridled, would turn the human race into an immense republic of wolves... But I am digressing from my subject; let us allow the various peoples to follow their respective tendencies, and come back to our good Chipewyans. They alone are republican in the fullest meaning of the word, because they alone are without ambition. I am mistaken, these Savages are not republican, for there is no public interest, since every one of them works for his own particular interest; it is to a degree a happy situation where everyone, satisfied with his little successes, rejoices in those of others without envy.

Humility is essentially a Christian virtue, and therefore one cannot hope to find it among infidels. This word “I,” ringing so loudly in the discourse of the pedant, so sweet to the ear of the philosopher, also exists in the Chipewyan language; many fond accounts of real or alleged excellence prove that these brave people believe in themselves in the same way as do others. And why should they not? One sees great geniuses take empty pride in the elegant cut of their clothes; why should a poor child of the woods not think himself distinguished
because he is neither a murderer nor a robber, neither ambitious nor quarrelsome, and because he is a skilled hunter, etc., etc., etc.,?

If all men were like our Chipewyans, no one would have ever thought of protecting himself with bolts, nor of inventing padlocks. Of all vices, stealing is the one to which they have the greatest aversion and, certainly, this nation is the most honest of peoples. This is all the more extraordinary because they passionately love all their possessions; they are as reluctant to give up what is theirs, as to take what belongs to others. Nothing for nothing. The word “generosity” is erased from the dictionary they use, not only towards strangers, but even towards those they love most. I assure you that a missionary here who had to wait for help from his beloved people would need a good stomach. Sometimes, however, when there is an abundance of food, they receive their friends into their homes; apart from that, no friendship can replace payment. They never, or almost never, give without ulterior motives. These rare efforts make such an impression on their minds that they are engraved there, so to speak, never to be forgotten. The smallest mouthful of meat seems to them a precious deposit for which they are entitled to a life annuity. Woe to those whom they honour with their generosity! Add to this an unrestrained passion for importuning. If the laws against begging were in force here, the whole nation would have been behind bars for generations already. If you grant them their first request, it is immediately followed by a second, then by a third, and so on until at last a refusal, or even several refusals, forces them to stop asking. To give to one is almost to invite the others to come running for your gift. They are positively tiresome on this count and do not want to change.

On my arrival here, someone wishing to summarize their character on this point told me: “A Chipewyan will ask for your last shirt.” The expression struck me as exaggerated, but it was not long before I became convinced it was absolutely true. In fact, one day when I was away on service, a Chipewyan accosted me and said: “Give me a shirt.” I excused myself on account of my poverty; but he insisted, feeling with his finger for the collar of my shirt: “Here is one,” he said, “it is almost clean, and you must have another one to replace it when it becomes soiled; just give me the one you are wearing and put on the clean one.” Unfortunately for him, the poor man had guessed only too well the state of my wardrobe. This fact also shows you that our Savages are not what polite society would call refined. Shame often colours their faces, but it almost never directs their conduct: so there is a saying, “as cheeky as a Chipewyan.” They must see and touch everything. Among the neighbouring tribes one finds what could be called Indian courtesy; among the Chipewyans, nothing, absolutely nothing, resembling politeness, or the sense of what is fitting and which adds so much pleasure to our relations with our
fellow men. These Savages maintain in their dealings, both among themselves and with strangers, a character of downright rusticity which pleases them as much as it embarrasses others. There is neither rank nor distinction. The child and the old man, the father and the son, treat one another as equals, correct one another and laugh at one another as if age and nature did not command respect. The presence of the highest dignitaries would not stop them playing about. Were they before her gracious Majesty, they would not even try to tone down the explosive expressions of their intestinal needs.

Let us now pass on to the details of their morality. I would like to draw a veil over this sad page of the story of my people, but, as it is somewhat distinctive, I would consider I had failed in the task you set if I remained altogether silent. Here, as everywhere, immorality is the great social plague, and an even more profound plague as it is more disgusting and more widespread. It is in this very respect that the inadequacy of our humble reason displays itself. How is it that the most shameful passions can appease the hearts which the Supreme Being alone can satisfy! However pitiful the picture which the Chipewyan nation presented in this regard at the time of the missionaries’ arrival, there are nevertheless, in the very manner of its immorality, some traits which set this nation above the other children of nature and even above the first-born of civilization. The capacity for evil in man is such that one is sometimes surprised to find him not fallen as low as he could possibly go. To fully understand the degradation of humanity on this point, it is enough to know that it was necessary “that a rain of sulphur and fire” came to wash away the iniquities of five infamous cities; that after this manifestation of the supreme justice, human legislators, like the divine lawgiver, were obliged to include in their statutes certain laws which clearly prove that man, endowed with reason, is eager to debase himself to the level of the brute and to turn his reason into an accomplice for the perverse desires of his heart. Thanks be to God, these two abominable vices are not known among our Chipewyans; they may often offend modesty, but they never offend nature. It is all the more astonishing that the Crees, with whom they are in daily contact, are nothing less than scrupulous in this matter. The mouth speaks from what is stored in the heart; hence, in so many people we find this frightening facility to speak what can justly be called evil, since it corrupts morality. Here again, our Savages could give some lessons to more enlightened people. The young people would sometimes yield to their mutual desires, but always in secret, and never with the lust or the effrontery which are natural signs of the corruption of the heart. Apart from these grave disorders, our poor Savages had many others which were equally unsuitable; it is not necessary to comment on them. They looked upon polygamy as something as natural and legitimate as monogamy. The good hunters considered themselves authorized to take as many
women as they could provide for; this was commonly two, often three, occasionally four and never beyond that number. However, I know of one who had ten.

The sacred bonds of matrimony, in no way tightened by a prior affection, were as loose as the whim which had tied them. Under the smallest pretext or simply through the fickleness so natural to man, couples would separate and reunite with a ludicrous ease which was interrupted only by the claims of a rival. A weak desire at the outset would grow sour through resistance; frequent quarrels, always more ridiculous than dangerous, brought into the open the war-like ardour of the lovers. The intended became the prey of the victor, who took possession of her by agreement or by force, and this in the presence of the family who ordinarily remained impassive spectators to the scene. This practice, like so many others, had the force of law. How many girls in our country there are who do not marry when they would like, but at least when they do get married it is only when they want to, and to someone they want. Our Chipewyan girls did not have the same privilege; if they had the misfortune to please, they lost their liberty.

In the eyes of the men of the nation, woman was but an instrument of satisfaction; they did not even do her the honour of consulting her. Such an order of things was doubtless a source of unrest, but less so than it would have been among another people endowed with the same liberties. The Chipewyans, extremely jealous by nature, were not sensitive about the honour of their wives. One of the formalities of their reception ceremony was to share their matrimonial bed with a parent or friend to whom hospitality was offered. When two men were together, there was nothing more common than the exchange of companions for a set time. Adultery, committed against the will of the offended party, seemed a crime to them. Fornication, although not considered to be very commendable, was not viewed with the degree of disapprobation it deserves. The woman, less passionate than the man, sometimes forgot the modesty which should always be her most beautiful ornamental, but she would never show off her degradation in public. The incomprehensible necessity to recognize crime could have originated only in the destinies of civilization, and the mere mention of it would make the children of the forests blush. I have told you enough about this distressing subject. Forgive me if my desire for accuracy overcame my fear of offending your modesty.

3. Physical stature. — Our Chipewyans have quite a becoming physique; they are perhaps above average in height. I have measured one who was six feet three inches tall. They are neither handsome nor ugly. Their face is quite similar to the European type, with the exception of their protruding cheekbones. Their thick hair is often light brown during childhood, but always becomes black, especially among
men. Their eyes, neither big nor small, do not show the expression of alertness and teasing which is quite common with black eyes, especially those of the Savages; it is easy to read in their eyes the gentleness and calm of their character, which is apparent in their features. Their teeth are neither as white nor as regular as those of people who, like themselves, use food without seasoning; they show the same variety as at home [in Canada]. A beard, often luxuriant and always black, distinguishes them from the other peoples of the woods. Their way of life is more than sufficient to darken their complexion; however, a certain number can be found who are far from dark. Their nose, neither aquiline nor very protruding, is almost always somewhat flattened at its extremity and does not show the indefinable variety which is found in other countries; I know only one of them the proportions of whose nose would have some chance of success in an exhibition of this interesting part of ourselves. They have a delicate and quite tiny foot; following the example of our dandies they take pride in this so-called advantage. The women, in this part of the country at least, are small; a considerable degree of rotundity helps them gain in width what they lose in height. The desire to please, and especially the love of dress so common among women (and in this respect I know a good number of men who are women), must be encouraged in them rather than repressed. Although an enemy of luxury, I am somewhat forced to be its apostle here. Our squaws, it is said, are not ugly; but a better eye than mine is needed to find their charms beneath the thick layer of dirt and fat which serves as a veil over which their short hair hangs, with a capricious carelessness, down to their mouths. Too often the desire to please makes women in general forget certain proprieties, a forgetfulness which renders them contemptible; nothing of this kind is found among our Chipewyan women. Understanding that clothes are given to us only to cover ourselves, they draw the perfectly logical conclusion that they are better dressed when more is hidden. The mothers, however, often make exceptions in the exercise of their maternal duties. I think I have already spoken to you about the dress of the women; let it suffice for me to add here that, unless one sees it, it is impossible to have an idea of the disgusting dirtiness which characterizes it. Men's clothes are quite similar to those of our peasants; they obtain their clothing in the stores of the Company where it is received ready made from England. However, trousers are little used; they are replaced by mitasses, and an indescribable shred of cloth which they call brayet. In autumn, when they come for their credit, the men have a certain air of affluence; their blue or white overcoats, their black, white or red mitasses, their Scottish caps and their coloured belts would lead one to believe that they live, if not in opulence, at least in an honest mediocrity. Alas! How different is the scene in spring and how pitiful the spectacle they present then.

One trait peculiar to our Savages is that, although they are very
covetous of beautiful and fine clothes, they have no taste whatsoever for useless ornaments; no glass beads, no necklaces, no earrings, nothing of that kind. They always prefer the sensible to the frivolous. No adornments in their hair; it hangs in disorder on their shoulders. The men, who are generally better combed than the women, cut their hair at eye height across the entire width of the forehead. The art of make-up has not yet attained a high degree of perfection here. It consists very simply of using a piece of any kind of fat and rubbing it on the hair, the face and the hands with an unlimited extravagance. Men, women and children, all like the shining polish resulting from this operation. One must admit that it has one precious advantage, that of destroying the superabundance of the insect population which, entrenched in the forests of their heads, sends out numerous colonies to populate the most remote parts of the individual. This implacable enemy of mankind’s peace appears to love the Chipewyan nation, although that nation has declared a war of retaliation against it. Yes, a tooth for a tooth. A Chipewyan, and especially a Chipewyan woman, feeling herself bothered by some giant of the species, catches it with astonishing dexterity and condemns it, between her teeth, to a death worthy of its stinging audacity. The desire to destroy vermin sometimes leads them to forget the rules of modesty, but it is all done in innocence, and, if they suffer as much as their pastor, feeling that they are being eaten alive, I think that these little lapses can be forgiven them.

Before the arrival of the Europeans, the skin of animals, especially of the caribou, was the sole source of clothing for our Chipewyans. I am not too aware of their form; there is good reason to suppose that it was in no way subject to the capricious variations of fashion. I have been able to obtain more information on the various utensils they then used. Their axes were made of caribou horns, their “crooked knives” with beavers’ teeth; their other knives, their chisels (to break through the ice), their fish-hooks and spears were fashioned from hard and keen-edged stones; their awls and needles were made from pickerel bones. Their spoons were made of wood or from musk-ox horns. As the inventors of phosphoric matches had not yet imparted to the world their precious invention, our Indians were quite content to produce a spark by striking two pebbles together. It is easy to understand how little suited these various objects are to the usage made of them, and that our Savages must have received with great joy all the things brought by the Europeans. Besides the fish-hook, the Chipewyans knew how to use nets; instead of thread they used babiche. I have seen some of these nets; they are better than I would have expected. Their arms for hunting and warfare were the bow and arrow and a few spears. Having no metal pans, they boiled their food in bark or stone dishes over red-hot stones. Often, even today, the belly of an animal renders them this service; they put the meat with water inside
it and hang it over the fire; they then rotate it until the whole is boiling vigorously. They claim that meat prepared in this way would baffle the best gastronomers. All I know is that you have to be one of them to like the spices that an over-indulgent glance reveals in the wrinkles of this remarkable cauldron. Our amiable people are even more grubby in their food than in their clothes. I suppose you will readily excuse me from proving this statement. I assure you that, although I am not overscrupulous myself in this regard, the sight of them turned my stomach often enough that you can take my word for it. Our Chipewyans are exceedingly greedy. If something is offered to them, they first feel everything, then select the most succulent parts which they devour with a disgusting gluttony. Fat meat and grease are their favorite dishes. The use of a fork is unknown to them; this is how they make up for it. They hold the meat in their left hand, grasp it between their teeth, then the knife cuts off as much as the mouth can hold. The first few times I witnessed these scenes, I expected at any moment to see the end of someone’s nose fall into the dish, but no, their skill in this is equalled only by the vivacity with which the operation is performed. A dull silence reigns during all this time; one sees that it is a matter of life and death. When the food is finished, everyone licks his fingers and wipes them in his hair. They look at one another complacently when the food has been plentiful; then conversations resume. During this time the stomach, astonished by the treatment to which it has been subjected, tries to recover from its surprise; some explosions from the upper storey restore equilibrium, and they are ready to start again. What amazes me is that indigestion is unknown. After rigorous fasts, they fill their stomachs with a prodigious quantity of the most substantial food without the slightest difficulty.

Our Savages live in huts or tents made of skins. They are cone-shaped, the diameter of the base of the cone varying according to the number of those who live in it. The fire is in the middle. All are seated in the oriental manner or lying down, again according to the custom of the same peoples. These huts seem to me to be the least desirable dwellings imaginable. For myself, I cannot get used to them; I have never come out of one without cramp. Although there is a certain order in the distribution of places, this order nevertheless varies; I noticed with grief that only the old women had set places: the worst ones, at the entrance, where they have to fight with all the family dogs to keep the small portion of space assigned to them. In winter especially, the Chipewyans are dispersed; one rarely sees two or three huts at the same place, and then only for a short while. In the summer they regather in greater numbers. Here again all their dirtiness is shown. It is enough for a need to be natural that they feel authorized to relieve themselves *coram sole et populo.*

How often have I regretted my incapacity to enforce that law of
Deuteronomy ordering the Jews to carry a pointed stick in their belt and the use they were to make of it. This passage from the holy scriptures may perhaps have given the free-thinkers or the feeble-minded a laugh. I would like to embarrass them by having them survey a Chipewyan camp. Unless they are totally deprived of sight, touch and smell, they would easily understand that the divine Legislator understood things better than they do, and that the smallest of his rules is filled with the most profound wisdom.

Our Chipewyans live by hunting. Moose, caribou, deer and wild ox form their main diet. Although it seems painful for them to eat fish, they are nevertheless obliged to endure it, especially over the past few years. They are very happy when the fishing does not also fail. Oh! How pitiful was their lot before they heard about religion. To be born in tears, to live in suffering and to die without hope could summarize their history. These moving words of the father of suffering can still be applied to them to the letter: “Man born of woman lives but a short time and is filled with miseries.” There is an extreme and general misery which is astonishing and which requires in those subjected to it a capacity for suffering which those who are used to another way of life cannot comprehend. You know that as a rule our Savages live from day to day, and in consequence are sometimes in abundance and the next day in need. Our Chipewyans, who have much more foresight than the others, are in fact less exposed to these inevitable hardships. Nevertheless, it frequently happens that the poverty of times and places prevents their foresight from being helpful.

One day, I asked one of them if he had ever been as long as three days without eating. He burst out laughing and said: “You just do not know how we live; I have been up to ten days without taking a single mouthful, neither myself, my wife, nor my children.” This is not a rare exception; almost all have the same experience at one time or another. The man of whom I speak is possibly the best hunter in the district. Their situation is less difficult in summer. Besides the fact that they do not have to fight against the bad weather, the country offers more resources than in winter. The proof of the greater suffering in winter is clearly found in the mortality rate during this healthy season. The ratio of summer to winter deaths is about one to eight, sometimes ten. Frequent and lengthy fasts ruin their constitution. Cases of normal longevity are much rarer than elsewhere. In winter especially, all illnesses are serious and almost always mortal. I was trying to encourage a man whose wife was only slightly indisposed and he replied: “We are not like the Whites; death is strong against us, it does not let us be slightly sick.” The unfortunate man was right.

In order to have a complete idea of the destitution of these Savages, the excessive poverty of their clothing must be added to the frequent shortage of food. For myself, I am still wondering how they
can resist the rigours of the climate in which they live without resources other than those at their disposal. Habits acquired in childhood must have deprived them of feeling to a degree difficult to imagine. Even in the most intense cold, they sleep outdoors without a fire and under a single blanket, often very much shorter than themselves. I was travelling in winter; a Savage who was with me had already given me several examples of his capacity in this respect. The temperature on the eve of our arrival here was thirty-two degrees (Reaumur) and intensified by a strong wind. During the night, several outbursts of shivering warned me that my bed was not warm enough. We were camped in a very unsuitable place, without shelter and with little wood to make a fire. On wakening, I was shivering all over and my teeth were chattering. I then noticed my Chipewyan with his bare feet sticking out from under his little blanket, exposed to the air and separated from the snow by a fir branch. I could not hold back a cry of surprise, fearing that he was frozen. My other companions woke him up, although with difficulty. He then admitted that he had slept soundly all night without even feeling the cold. When I travel in the winter I usually take two blankets to cover myself, while my coat serves as a mattress.

I did not think that such a bed was in any way a luxury when it is necessary to sleep in the open. Well! would you believe it, good mother, I have probably never once prepared this simple bed without hearing the Savages who were accompanying me pass remarks on the happiness of my situation, on the advantage of being so sumptuously furnished with all the necessities of life. Two blankets for one man seemed to them a treasure which only strangers to their nation could possess. It may be asked how these Savages can be so poor, when their furs are a source of wealth for the Company which enjoys the exclusive privilege of trading here? I would like to tell you at length about this Company, but I shall come back to it; let it be enough for this time to tell you frankly that I am far from the opinion of those who see only evil in it and who work towards its destruction. I do not pretend to say that it is entirely above reproach; certainly what administration entrusted to human hands leaves nothing to be corrected? Undoubtedly more could be expected from a benevolent society which had immense sums of money to spend on the welfare of the natives of these parts, but I think that we cannot reasonably ask more from a company of merchants who acquire through considerable hardships a modest fortune for their old age. It is a great mistake to compare this company with the North West Company, or with what it might have been had it not been engaged in continuing battle against the most powerful of its antagonists. Here, in three words, is my opinion. In all the territory of the Chipewyans which I know intimately and where the use of intoxicating liquor is absolutely forbidden. I find that the trade of the honourable Hudson’s Bay Company is carried out according to the most strict justice. Moreover, the greatest evil which
could befall our Savages would be the opposition, from whatever side it came. What is more, although the help this Company gives us may seem very little, nevertheless, without it, and left with only the resources we now have, it would be morally impossible for us to continue the work of the missions here. The opinion I now express is not one that I have always held, but is the result of serious and conscientious reflection on the situation of the Indians, for whose welfare I work. I am on this point partisan only by conviction; I am not even influenced by the courteous and generous treatment which I personally have received in all my dealings with members of the Company. I have already told you several times of the fatherly kindness of Mr. McKenzie, and I could say the same of his successor, Mr. N. Finlayson; nevertheless, as I am not here on my own account, the propriety of these dealings would not blind me to the point that I would close my eyes to the lot of those whose happiness is intimately linked with mine. If therefore these Savages are so poor, it is due to the adorable will of God who has placed them in the most inhospitable corner of the world. More industry and a little more hard work would also improve their condition. Our own situation does not allow us to help them in any other way than by our advice. This mode of regenerating a nation is slow. It takes time to change habits which are the result of centuries.

If the condition of the tribe is indeed pitiful, that of the women involves privations and suffering absolutely unknown among civilized nations. "I shall multiply your sufferings," said God to the first sinner; this terrible curse still lies heavy here: it is misery multiplied by misery, resulting in terrifying anguish. Christian women, if you do not understand the advantages that spiritual rebirth has procured for you, come for a while to the school of infidel nations, and you shall see what you would be without the salutary influence of Christianity. Beloved mother, in other letters, I have already unfolded to you the catalogue of miseries endured here by your sex. Your feelings were sufficiently touched by it that there is no need to repeat it. I must now put an end to the account I undertook to give you of the Savages I am evangelizing. I have already said too much for a letter; not enough for the history of a people.

If, as one might suppose, God has assigned to nations as well as to individuals the role which they have to play on the great scene of the world, it is permissible to wonder what can be the role of the Chipewyan nation. This role certainly seems very restricted, especially if one compares it with that of the colossal powers who extend their empires from one pole to the other and dictate their laws to hundreds of subsidiary nations. In any mechanism, both the smallest wheels and the greatest are necessary for the smooth running of the whole; likewise, in the great harmony of the world, the weakest as well as the most powerful of nations must contribute to the general enlighten-
ment. Thus our Chipewyans, in the midst of the grossest ignorance and the most profound poverty, offer some salutary lessons in their moral code. Natural religion was sufficient to convince them to set up an insuperable barrier to the passions which all too frequently corrupt even the most Christian groups. This would seem to show that we must look beyond the degradation of human nature to discover the reasons for crimes which are incomprehensible to reasonable beings. Deprived of original innocence, we doubtless have a natural propensity for evil, but this propensity becomes stronger and more widespread because of the ease with which we pursue it, to the point where it is true to say that we corrupt our own corruption. The conduct of this nation seems to me also to be a great justification of providence and proves that God must have said to men, through their primitive law, what he repeated to the great apostle of perfect charity: “My grace is sufficient unto thee.” By a secret judgment as adorable as it is impenetrable, generations have succeeded generations right up to the present; centuries have followed centuries right up to our times, without this nation ever receiving the precious graces which have been given to others at their birth; without it ever hearing of its Redeemer; without even desiring to, for lack of knowing Him. But, finally, the favourable hour has come; God, in his mercy, has remembered his people and sent ministers to raise the standard of salvation on these inhospitable shores which seemed accessible only to greed. Your son, in the company of a truly worthy friend, and followed by more of our dear brothers, has been chosen to continue the work of a zealous predecessor! Well, I ask you, is the position of this son so miserable? I call upon your own judgment, not, in truth, to your testimony as a mother. I know that before that tribunal, as before that of my own heart as a son, I would receive a swift and total condemnation. I call upon you as a woman, and above all as a Christian woman. The world admires the joy of a mother whose son, in a political turmoil, will arm himself with a sword and rush selflessly to the help of his fellow citizens. And lo! Would the happiness of a Christian mother be any less when her son, a young soldier of the Lord’s army, seeing humanity at war with its most formidable enemies, will arm himself with the saving Cross and run to the aid of the most neglected portion of the great human family? Would you blame me, good and loving mother, for having followed the natural consequences of the principles you have tried to engrave in my heart since my earliest days? Young plants for a long time show traces of the bonds which united them with the stakes supporting them; so also has my heart kept the memory of the advice you unsparingly gave me in my inexperience. “Understand, my son,” you often told me, “that the sweetest and purest of satisfactions is to do good to our fellow men.” This happiness, loving mother, I understood; I enjoy it in all its fullness. Would you wish to take it away from me? Would you wish to be saddened by what is,
after all, the ambition of all mothers? No! These are not your sentiments; your letters, all filled with the tenderest love as well as with the noblest resignation, prove that I was not mistaken in my estimation of the soundness of your character and of the degree of your piety. In fact, from whatever point of view one considers the conduct of a Canadian priest dedicating himself to the Indian missions of British America, one can see only reasons for consolation. As to the great questions of humanity and religion, the case in point speaks for itself too clearly to need proof. From the political point of view, this behaviour also has merit, since it consists in producing more enlightened and better, that is, more faithful subjects from those nations submissive to the glorious Empire whose flag flies on the banks of our great river. From the national point of view, this step by a Canadian priest must be meritorious in the eyes of his fellow citizens, since he is paying his country’s debt.

The European who sets foot for the first time on the soil of our beloved country is astonished by the revolution which takes place in his ideas; the testimony of his senses is so surprising that it is barely sufficient to dispel his illusions. The words “Canada” and “Canadian” have always been associated by him with a scene so thickly forested that he has been unable to rid himself of the ideas of a wild country and of a barbarian people. He is very much surprised to find, beyond the seas, the trappings of civilization and, in our country people, the pure blood of our ancestors and all the courtesy which distinguishes them. The Canadian who visits the immense solitude of the North West experiences as great an astonishment, but of a very different nature. When a person examines his home, he finds in it an array of precious qualities which make it commendable in the eyes of everyone; but if he moves away from the steeple of his parish, if he ceases to hear the voice of the pastor who guided his youth, he becomes an altogether different person. It is in the Indian country especially that his behaviour shows the most disgusting side of his own history. And so, Canadian myself, I have very often blushed at the poor conduct of our voyageurs in this region and told myself: “since some of my fellow countrymen wore themselves out here in an orgy of corruption, I am honour bound to work hard for the regeneration of their progeny and of the nations to which they joined themselves by unions which were too tarnished to be honourable.” I am living more of a family life here than might perhaps be expected. Besides the employees of the forts, who are almost all Canadians or sons of Canadians, one finds, among the Savages themselves, names which tell clearly enough the origin of those who bear them. On our arrival at the portage of Fort de Traite, we noticed (Mr. Lafleche and I) an Indian better-looking than his brothers. Mr. McKenzie introduced him to us, saying: “this is M…” “What!” I exclaimed with great surprise, “would he be a relative of…?” “Precisely,” added our respectable companion,
“this Savage is the son of the honourable M... de...” I know that the brothers and sisters of this half-breed flaunt their wealth daily before the inhabitants of Montreal without perhaps ever having thought of giving a mite to the Propagation of the Faith, the only effective method of helping the man whom they must cherish as a brother according to the law of nature.

I mention this fact among a thousand, because there are many Canadian families who would be surprised to find some of their members among the Savages wallowing in the most profound ignorance, forgetful of the God who served their ancestors and whom their fathers have taught them only to curse. Just as we were approaching this place for the first time, a Chipewyan got aboard our barge and came up to us, swearing in French. The poor man did not have the slightest idea of what he was saying, he was simply echoing Canadian phrases too commonly used for these kinds of greetings. This is why I say that the Canadian priest is paying off a national debt. I was neither a traitor to my country, nor forgetful of my duties toward our gracious Sovereign, when I joined an Order capable of assigning me to the vocation which I am so happy to follow. I quote those words because they were once said, largely in reference to me, in a place where every word should have been a counsel of wisdom, and where every individual should at least avoid being ridiculous. Just because I am far from my own country, I do not lose the feelings which should move every good man. The Saviour who assigned the entire world to his missionaries as their country did not forbid them to show a fondness for the land of their birth. Beloved Canada, I would like to send you traitors like those who give everything they have out here to pay off the holy debt that your most unworthy children have contracted in your name.

If there is one feeling to which I have been a traitor, it is the consideration I should have had for your sensitivity; you are the one, loving mother, who must pardon me for this crime; I know that you have already done so. Although I know your sentiments on this subject, I thought I should not conceal the preceding reflections, because they are of such a nature as to sustain your courage against the painful impressions which a very natural love may implant in your heart. Religion rules the emotions, but it can neither stifle nor condemn them. Virtue is not the enemy of sensitivity; I can see no virtue at all where there is only apathy. And so, loving mother, I understand that you must suffer from your son being so far away, just as he himself suffers through his separation from the mother who has so much right to his love. For our mutual consolation, let us often say: “The hand of God is here,” He is the one who unites us in spirit, even when he separates us in body. Blessed be His holy name! His will be done. Yes, tender mother, let His loving will be done! Let us be joyful that
the Lord has looked favourably upon us! Shall we regret the sacrifices necessary to spread the word of this good master to the many peoples who know him not? May these great thoughts help to give you strength. May God in His infinite goodness bless my mother and console her a hundredfold for the grief I may have caused her through my sole aim of helping my fellow men. And if the thought that one is loved by those one cherishes is the greatest alleviation of the sorrows of separation, then be reassured that the heart of your son is similar to that of his mother; he loves God ardently above all, and his mother, after God. Besides, last week I sent you a letter on the occasion of the New Year which will tell you well enough that neither time nor separation in any way diminishes the love I have for her who is interested only in my happiness. Goodbye, dear mother. Who knows if God does not keep in store the joy of seeing us united again in this world! What I do know is that He leaves it to me, and even commands me, to dutifully love you.

This thought consoles and encourages the most tenderly affectionate of your sons.

ALEX. TACHÉ

NOTES


The various editions are somewhat different as some words have been changed or some words or paragraphs omitted. The text translated here is of the first version mentioned above and is the most complete.

2 The use of the French word “Sauvage” had no disparaging connotation at the time, as it sometimes has today. It has been translated literally, as “Savage,” except in contexts where to do so is inappropriate in English usage.

3 René Châteaubriand.

4 Taché was not writing for the public, and one can conclude that the observations he makes in his letter are really his own opinion. As early as January 6, 1847, he complained to his mother: “This time, I am sending you a few details of my trip. If, in Montreal, they were not so eager to print, I would be ashamed to say that this piece was not written for the public, but in the present circumstances it is a useless precaution. This letter is for your own satisfaction and that of the family and these are, at the most, the limits of its distribution. I say nothing on the Indians; it would be the most interesting part, but you lose nothing by waiting and I propose to send you, in the spring, a long article on their account; I have not had time to do it now.” (Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, 2 [1903], p. 191). See also his letter to his mother, October 4, 1859, also in Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, 2 (1903), p. 501. As for the letter translated here, the Editor of the Rapport writes: “We owe to the good offices of a friend the following letter […] although it was not intended for publication,” (p. 67)

5 Or Stoney.

6 It is intriguing to note Taché’s use of lines of latitude to describe the limits of the areas covered by the various “families,” which serves to emphasize how little known the region then was by Europeans.

7 “From one, learn about them all.” Taché also gives information on the various tribes in his Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l’Amérique, Montreal, Typographie de Nouveau Monde, 1869. For the Chipewyans, see pp. 86–89.

8 Of the fourth family. He gives a more complete description of these tribes in Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l’Amérique, pp. 89–91.

9 Kutchins or “Quarrelsome.”

10 He adds the following note (p. 69): “This word Montagnais has misled some writers into saying that they are a tribe of the Saulteaux, to whom they bear not even the shadow of a
resemblance. Nor should this name make one believe that they resemble the Montagnais of the Saguenay. It is the latter which must be considered as a tribe of the Saulteaux or the Crees."

11 Taché says of the language in his letter to Simon James Dawson on February 7, 1859, “Mr. Humboldt made a serious blunder when he assured us that there was a great resemblance in the structure of all the Indian languages.” (Missions de la Congrégation des Missionnaires Oblats de Marie Immaculée, 2 [1863], p. 161).

12 This is an effort to convey the probable sense of the original; Taché’s meaning for “à part” is not clear.

13 For Taché on the intelligence of the Indian, see Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l’Amérique, pp. 76–78.

14 The French word “jonglerie” was used in the text; it is normally used to convey the sense of the “trickery” or sleight-of-hand characteristic of a juggler.

15 It should be pointed out here that the story of the flood might nevertheless have found its way into the Chipewyan lore by a process of diffusion originating in a Christian society and reaching the North West perhaps a number of generations before the arrival of the missionaries.

16 There is a typographical error in the French text. The word “peuvent” (p. 77) must be changed to “pensent” as in the other published texts of this letter.

17 For Taché on the Chipewyan woman, see the letter to his mother, April 10, 1848, in Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, 2 (1903), pp. 320–322, 331–334.

18 The Indian had to feel Taché’s shirt with his finger, since it was beneath the priest’s cassock.

19 The text in the Rapport de l’Association de la Propagation de la Foi pour le District de Montréal reads “sans effet” (p. 83) and that of the Rapport sur les Missions du Diocèse de Québec: “sans assaisonnements” (p. 27).

20 See Taché to his mother, April 10, 1848.

21 In the letter to his mother, April 10, 1848, p. 319, he uses the word “haut-de-chausse” or breeches, called “mitas” in the country.

22 The translation of this word is uncertain.

23 Leather thongs.

24 “Under the sun and in public.”

25 The text erroneously has “lieux” instead of “liens” as in the Rapport sur les Missions du Diocèse de Québec, p. 39.

26 Taché is probably alluding here to conversations with priests in rectories. He had joined a French Order and had been sent to the missions, and some of his contemporaries may have felt that he was turning his back on what could have been a very useful career as a priest in Eastern Canada.
In the autumn of 1869 a group of Métis under the leadership of Louis Riel forcibly prevented William McDougall from entering Red River. McDougall was Canada's governor designate for this territory, which was expected to soon become a part of the Dominion, and the Métis refusal to let him enter marked the beginning of what
was to become known as the Red River resistance. It would take nearly nine months, the creation of a new province and the presence of a military force before the North West truly became a part of Canada. Through the intervening period the Métis continued by force of arms to assert their right to be consulted on their own future, while the Conservative government of John A. Macdonald sought to repair past carelessness and to find a compromise solution. Standing between these two parties and working to prevent any agreement was an informal coalition made up of expansionists and nationalists in Ontario and the pro-annexation “Canada Party” in Red River.

History has not been kind to these men who were most extreme in their opposition to the Métis. They have been assigned much of the blame both for the outbreak of the rebellion and for increasing the problems in the way of a solution. Even more seriously, they have been accused of bringing unnecessary racial and religious prejudices to the surface, thereby undermining the understanding between French and English Canada that was essential to national unity. Descriptions of their tragi-comic military efforts in Red River and their paranoid rhetoric in Ontario have ensured that the image presented to successive generations has been of a dangerous and slightly ludicrous group of fanatics.

Much of the criticism is justified. The economic designs of Canadians on the Red River settlement and their arrogance in assuming the right to impose these designs encouraged the Métis resistance to the transfer. Emotional meetings in the East and attempts to arrest delegates from Red River aggravated an already tense situation and brought forth the spectre of racial conflict. Even if the main points of these traditional interpretations are accepted, however, two questions arise. First, what provoked these men to take such an extreme position? What distinguished the analysis of men like George Brown, Charles Mair and John Christian Schultz from that of other English Canadians, including John A. Macdonald, who saw the Métis action as a political problem and acted accordingly? Second, how was it that a rebellion on the banks of the Red River became a major threat to French-English relations in Canada? French Canadians had never closely identified the Métis with their own culture, and when the rebellion began the French-language press differed little in its reactions from its English counterpart. Yet within a few months the resistance of the Métis became a symbol to many in both French and English Canada of their own position in the young Dominion.

In order to answer these questions, it is useful to view the Red River resistance through the eyes of those who most opposed it. In retrospect it is apparent that many of their attitudes were the result of misconceptions and prejudice. Nevertheless, given the assumption from which they operated, their actions were fairly consistent through-
out. They were motivated not by a vindictive desire to obliterate a weaker culture in the West, but by a fear that others were manipulating these people for conspiratorial ends. They felt it their duty to unmask the true conspiracy that lay behind Métis actions. In attempting to do so, they transformed and aggravated the whole nature of the rebellion.

The reaction of those who took the hardest line during the rebellion was largely predetermined by their enthusiastic acceptance of the twelve-year campaign for annexation of the North West to Canada. Since 1857 groups in English Canada had been calling for the immediate transfer of the Hudson’s Bay Territories, and those who figured prominently in the events of 1869–1870 were among the most ardent supporters of this movement. From the beginning Canadian expansionism had been predicated on the assumption that the inhabitants of the Hudson’s Bay Territories were unhappy with Company rule. The petitions presented to the Colonial Secretary by Alexander Isbister in the 1840s and the resistance of the Métis to Hudson’s Bay Company rule in the Sayer trial had been factors in stirring Canadian interest. By 1857, when the expansionist movement in Canada came into its own, the links between Canadian desires and supposed discontent in Red River had grown even stronger. The assumption had developed that there was a community of interest between Canada and Red River. It was truly, if conveniently, believed that, as Isbister said, “the unanimous desire of the inhabitants of the Hudson’s Bay Territories is to have the entire region annexed to Canada.”

During the expansionist campaign this belief was reinforced by numerous petitions from Red River. The pattern was set in the summer of 1857 when a petition with some 574 signatures was sent to Canada praying for the development of the region. From then until 1869 numerous other petitions flowed eastward to Canadian and British authorities. Resolutions such as the one of January 1867 asking “to be united with the Grand Confederation of British North America” encouraged the idea that the extension of Canada’s frontier was a two-way process. Of course, a good many of these petitions were of a questionable nature, having the support of but a relatively small segment of Red River’s population. Expansionists were not aware of this, however, and few in Red River who opposed the resolutions made their concerns known in the East. Canadian expansionists had neither reason nor the desire to doubt their authenticity, and the impression thus continued to grow that the settlers of Red River wanted annexation.

Actively encouraging this assumption were those expansionists who migrated west in the wake of the expansionist campaign and settled in Red River. They were to become known both by contempo-
raries and by history as the "Canada Party." This group's membership was succinctly defined in 1869 as being "those who favor annexation to Canada." These individuals, centred around the young Dr. John Christian Schultz, had been the force behind many of the petitions that had originated in Red River. It is not surprising that these men, having made a material and personal commitment to the development of the North West, attempted to encourage annexation.

The Canada Party had an especially strong influence in shaping the Canadian image of Red River because it controlled the *Nor'-Wester*, the only newspaper published in the North West. In 1859 two English-born journalists, William Buckingham and William Coldwell, arrived in Red River from Canada. Both had previously worked for George Brown at the *Globe*, and when they moved west they took not only their type and their practical experience in journalism but also a set of attitudes formed in Canadian expansionist circles. They founded Red River's first newspaper in order to further spread their expansionist views. Over the next several years the editorship of this paper would change hands many times, but it would remain a consistent advocate of the idea of Canadian expansion.

It is questionable whether the *Nor’Wester* did much to encourage support for Canada among the inhabitants of Red River. The *Nor’Wester*, like the Canada Party itself, proved a disruptive addition to the already unstable social structure of Red River in the 1860s and may have served to alienate rather than promote support for annexation to Canada. Even if such was the case, the influence of the *Nor’Wester* on Canadian expansion cannot be discounted. As every editor of the paper sensed, as much could be accomplished in the name of Canadian expansion in the East as in the West. The real impact of the paper was not among its readers in Red River but in a constituency thousands of miles away. As John Schultz said, "by it we are not only influenced here but judged abroad." The *Nor’Wester* was "the lighthouse on our coast—the beacon that lets men know we are here."

From Buckingham and Coldwell through James Ross, Schultz and W. R. Brown, the editors of the *Nor’Wester* realized that their paper could act as a spur to the eastern expansionists, and their style reflected that realization. As the only newspaper in the North West between 1859 and annexation, the *Nor’Wester* had a near monopoly on the interpretation of events in that region. Expansionists in the East, in turn, welcomed the information which the *Nor’Wester* provided as reliable and interesting. Editorials and opinions of the *Nor’Wester* were frequently printed in the Canadian papers and often served as the basis for their own editorial stance. Among Canadian expansionists a subscription to the *Nor’Wester* became a badge of membership in the campaign for annexation. At times it even seemed as if the paper's real readers were not the inhabitants of Red River
at all but the eastern expansionist community. When the *Nor'Wester* ran a special supplement on the formation of a Scientific Institute in Red River, none of the supplements reached the local populace for, as the paper unapologetically pointed out, "the whole impression [has] been mailed to foreigners."\(^{14}\)

The *Nor'Wester* and the Canada Party worked consistently to convince their eastern audience not only of the potential of the land but of the urgent desire of the people to cast off the yoke of the Hudson’s Bay Company. Attacks on Company rule were a consistent part of the paper’s policy and, by at least the latter 1860s, it repeatedly argued that the best solution was annexation to Canada.\(^{15}\) Further, many of the petitions which reached the East from Red River had their origins, and much of their support, in the group surrounding the paper. The petition presented by Sandford Fleming to the Canadian and British governments in 1863 was a case in point.\(^{16}\) The meetings which led to this petition were headed by none other than the two current editors of the *Nor'Wester*, James Ross and William Coldwell.\(^{17}\)

Thus, if the Canada Party was less than successful in its attempt to convert the people of Red River to annexation, the same cannot be said for its mission to convince Canadians that the settlement was ready and willing to join with them. The fictional and malicious character, Cool, in Alexander Begg’s *Dot-It-Down* summed it up when he said that “Canada has had an eye to the North West for some years past, and is only too ready and willing to swallow anything that is said against the Honorable Company, whether true or not.”\(^{18}\) Expansionists had long believed that by bringing British progress and liberties to the North West they were a “ray of light” in a dark region, and when the *Nor'Wester* confirmed their opinions they found no reason to doubt it.\(^{19}\) As the time for the transfer approached they confidently assumed, in the words of Charles Mair, that it was the unanimous desire of the people of Red River to possess “the unspeakable blessings of free Government and civilization.”\(^{20}\)

A second factor determining the expansionist attitude was the fact that the rebellion was primarily a movement of the French half-breed population. The men who had prevented McDougall’s entry into the North West had all been French-speaking, Catholic, half-breeds. Throughout the rebellion McDougall and those who shared his outlook saw the Métis as acting alone. It was believed, whether accurately or not, that the Canadians, English half-breeds and Europeans in the settlement were opposed to Riel. In other words the expansionists were convinced that the resistance had its origin and support in only one section of the population of Red River.

Until the rebellion, neither the Canadian government nor the expansionists had paid much attention to the Métis. The Sayer trial
and the appearance of French names on various petitions had encouraged the assumption that their opinions were indistinguishable from those of the other segments of Red River's population. This is hardly surprising, given eastern reliance on the Canada Party and the *Nor'Wester* for information. Nevertheless, the failure to recognize this powerful and distinct community in Red River proved to be a costly blunder.

Contributing to the lack of understanding was the prevailing lack of knowledge concerning the Métis in Canada. Aside from the buffalo hunt, which drew general comment from tourists and writers before 1870, little was written on the Métis. Even in the case of the buffalo hunt, writers had consistently failed to follow the implication of such organization through to its logical conclusion. Those who wrote of the North West did not relate, or did not themselves perceive, the powerful sense of identity and ability to work in concert which was a part of the Métis tradition. Rather, when the Métis were mentioned at all, it was in a manner that portrayed them as rather quaint and undisciplined individuals whose habits and character were drawn from their wilderness environment. It was a composite portrait that served to accentuate their Indian background rather than their French language or Catholic religion. Even among French Canadians, where the identity of religion and language produced some sympathy for the Métis, there was a general belief that these people were a poor semi-nomadic group whose only link to civilization was through the church. English Canadians, while they noted the French language and Roman Catholic religion, saw the Métis character as distinct and separate from that of French Canada.

With such characteristics it was generally believed that the future of the Métis within a European framework was, at best, limited. The assumption was that they would only partly adapt to the on-rushing civilization and would thus be relegated to the bottom end of the socio-economic scale. They “will be very useful here when the country gets filled up,” Mair noted shortly before the transfer, for they are “easily dealt with and easily controlled.” The image of the Métis, and their role for the future, thus resembled that of peasant as much as it did Indian. Strong but manageable, able to cope with European civilization but unlikely to thrive on it, they were expected to passively accept their new lot.

Even such a limited prospect was regarded by expansionists as an improvement on the life which the Métis had led under the rule of the Hudson’s Bay Company. For both political and economic reasons Canadians expected to receive the gratitude of these people in the same way they expected the gratitude of all Red River. At the same time, it was hardly to be expected that the Métis, as either peasants or Indians, would be consulted in such a major transaction as the transfer
of the North West. They were at best a "wretched half-starved people" whose comprehension of such matters would be feeble.\textsuperscript{24} Even in the face of armed resistance, William McDougall could not understand that this image of the Métis was distorted and incomplete. "The Canadian Government," he maintained, had "done nothing to injure these people but everything to benefit them." There was thus no reason for the rebellion, except perhaps that "they — 3 or 4000 semi-savages and serfs of yesterday — will not be trusted with the government and destiny of a third of the American continent."\textsuperscript{25} With such an image of the Métis and such an underestimation of their sense of identity, it is not surprising that the expansionists were never able to comprehend the real reasons for the decisive resistance in Red River.

The first reaction of expansionists to this seemingly meaningless resistance was one of ridicule and contempt. McDougall initially predicted that the "insurrection will not last a week."\textsuperscript{26} The Globe, on hearing of the activity, scornfully commented on November 17, 1869, that "it is altogether too much of a joke to think of a handful of people barring the way to the onward progress of British institutions and British people on the pretence that the whole wide continent is theirs." As autumn moved into winter, however, and Louis Riel's provisional government gained rather than lost strength, such offhand comments dwindled in number. Gradually expansionists were forced to take the whole issue more seriously.

In attempting to analyze the situation and thereby reach a possible solution, the expansionists were at a disadvantage. Their image of the Métis and their continued belief that the majority of Red River was in favour of annexation made them unable to accept the arguments of the rebels at face value. Only by portraying the Métis as puppets in the hands of artful manipulators, whose real purpose was not being revealed, were they able to find an explanation satisfactory to their own presuppositions. The Nor'Wester, in its last issue, maintained that the Métis had been "imposed upon" and led into rebellion.\textsuperscript{27} McDougall concurred and wrote to Macdonald that "the half-breeds were ignorant and that parties behind were pushing them on."\textsuperscript{28} The Globe referred vaguely but pointedly to "certain persons in their settlement, who are hostile to the Dominion" as the ones who "have made it their business to stir up discontent among the most foolish and ignorant of the population."\textsuperscript{29} As expansionists, and those who agreed with them, developed this conspiratorial interpretation of the rebellion they began to focus on three individual but inter-related groups as the real instigators of the Métis resistance.

The conspirators who figured most prominently in expansionist thoughts came from south of the border. "It was well known at Fort Garry," McDougall commented in the fall of 1869, "that American
citizens had come into the country.” Ostensibly they were traders, but that was merely a mask for their plans to “create disaffection, and if possible, a movement for annexation to the United States.” These men and their allies “had been actively engaged in circulating stories, absurd as they were unfounded, to alarm the fears of the half-breeds, and excite their hostility against the Canadian government.”

It was not surprising that American designs on Red River should be seen as a force behind the Métis resistance. Canadian expansionists had long worried about American pretensions to the North West. The Nor’Wester, throughout its existence, had urged Canada to act quickly before Red River was forced into “annexation with the United States.” Also, as those interested in the North West were well aware, Canada was not the only home of expansionists. The effective monopoly which the State of Minnesota exerted over trade and transportation with Red River gave its own expansionists some hope that the North West would drift into the American political orbit.

The activities of American expansionists, such as Oscar Malmros, the U.S. Consul in Red River, Enos Stutsman and James Wickes Taylor, gave some reality to the charges of American encouragement of the Red River resistance. What Canadians, and particularly expansionists, failed to realize, however, was that these annexationist forces were auxiliary rather than basic to the Métis resistance. The presence of some annexationists in Riel’s provisional government and the creation of the New Nation gave the American party some influence in Red River in December 1869 and January 1870. Thereafter, however, this influence rapidly declined. Ironically, these Americans were as unable to understand the purpose of the Métis as were Canadian expansionists. The Americans assumed that their dislike of Canada could be transformed into American annexationism, while the Canadians feared that such a goal was all too probable.

The second force which expansionists perceived behind the rebellion was the Hudson’s Bay Company. When McDougall met resistance his first reaction, besides perplexed surprise, was to warn William McTavish, Governor of the Council of Assiniboia, that “you are the legal ruler of the country, and responsible for the preservation of the public peace.” It was, however, not as simple as that. As McTavish well knew, the Hudson’s Bay Company had no force with which to assert its authority. This had been apparent as far back as the Sayer trial, and it would have been both impossible and dangerous for the Company to have attempted to face such a determined group as the Métis. Canadian expansionists, however, had a different explanation. “The Hudson’s Bay Company are evidently with the rebels,” Schultz wrote in November, 1869. “It is said the rebels will support the Government of the Hudson’s Bay Company as it now exists.” The Member of Parliament for Brant North, J. Y. Bown, passing on
the opinions of his brother, the deposed editor of the *Nor’Wester*, warned Macdonald that before the rebellion “certain parties then in the pay of the Company and holding office under it made threats of what they would do.” McDougall, perhaps because he was an official representative of Canada, was more circumspect but did point to “the complicity of some of his [Governor McTavish’s] council with the insurrection.” However circumspect McDougall’s letter, the message remained the same. The current government of the North West had actively encouraged opposition to the lawful transfer of the territory of Canada.

Though a few individuals in the Company showed some sympathy for the Métis, the expansionists had little evidence to support their charges. The expansionists had proclaimed for so long that the Company exerted an oppressive tyranny over the people of Red River that they could not now accept the fact that it was powerless. Those more detached from the expansionist perspective tended to have a more realistic analysis. John A. Macdonald sharply disagreed with McDougall’s condemnation of McTavish, and at no time did the Canadian government accept the theory that there was any Hudson’s Bay involvement in the rebellion.

The third conspiratorial force perceived behind the rebellion was to prove the most dangerous in its implications for Canada. The Roman Catholic church, or at least its representatives in Red River, were also accused of aiding the Métis in their resistance. “The worst feature in this case,” McDougall told Macdonald, “is the apparent complicity of the priests.” Rather than support constituted authority they had openly supported rebellion. “It appears certain that at least one of them has openly preached sedition to his flock and has furnished aid and comfort to the parties in arms.” On December 9, 1869 the Toronto *Globe* singled out Father J. N. Richtot as the “head and front of the whole movement by the French half-breeds.” The Catholic clergy joined the rapidly swelling ranks of those who were seen as the instigators of rebellion, having “worked upon the ignorance and fears of the French speaking portion of the people to such an extent as to lead them to armed resistance.”

Expansionist perceptions of the relationship between the Métis and the clergy made it natural for them to suspect the priests. The Métis were viewed as a superstitious and ignorant people and, as every good Ontario Protestant knew, the Roman Catholic church exercised totalitarian control over its membership. It followed that had the clergy wished to stop the rebellion they could have. Further, no individual priest would dare work in opposition to his own church hierarchy. Thus the ultimate conclusion had to be, as the *Globe* decided in the spring of 1870, “that Bishop Taché holds the whole threads of the affair in his hand.” At any time he could have commanded
the Métis to cease resistance, but he consistently refrained from doing so. This was the best proof of all that the church was in league with the rebels. "A word from their Bishop," McDougall charged, "would have sent them all to their homes and re-established the lawful Government of Assiniboia, but that word was not spoken."\textsuperscript{41}

These accusations against the clergy were an almost instinctive reaction to a body which was viewed with extreme suspicion. The expansionist movement and its nationalist allies consisted largely of English-speaking Protestants. French-Canadian Roman Catholics had played little part in the effort to acquire the North West and thus had no spokesmen within the ranks of the movement. Moreover, many expansionist leaders, such as William McDougall, had long viewed the Catholic church as some sort of hostile foe conspiring against Canada. The religious and political controversies of Canadian history had paved the way for the expansionist reaction to the clergy in 1869. Many English Canadians were all too ready to implicate the Catholic church in any activity directed against the Canadian nation or British Empire.

Such conspiratorial explanations enabled the expansionists and nationalists to reconcile the rebellion with their belief that the population of Red River favoured entry into Canada. The rebellion was not a popular uprising at all. The majority of the people opposed the resistance, but as Mair theorized "the Yankee, the Company and the Priests had a fair field; whilst the loyal English natives, comprising about two thirds of the population, without arms and ammunition, cursed their own helplessness and shrunk from the guns at Fort Garry."\textsuperscript{42} The rebellion was the fault neither of Canada nor of the Canadian expansionists, and was not supported by the people of Red River. Foreign elements had manipulated an ignorant segment of the populace in order to gain their own nefarious ends.

The analysis of the rebellion had obvious implications for the policy to be pursued in bringing it to an end. For John A. Macdonald, who saw expansionist arrogance and Métis suspicions behind the outbreak, the best solution seemed to be "to behave in as patient and conciliatory a fashion as possible."\textsuperscript{43} The rebellion was essentially a movement aiming at political guarantees; to Macdonald, that implied a political solution. Compromise with the Métis would allay their fears and allow the peaceful acquisition of the territory before American expansionists could exploit the situation. He even suggested bringing Riel into the police force which was planned for the region as "a most convincing proof that you are not going to leave the half-breeds out of the law."\textsuperscript{44}

In contrast to Macdonald, those who saw the rebellion as a conspiracy felt it dangerous to assume that the matter could be resolved by conciliation. They perceived the ultimate goal of the rebellion to
be the disruption of Canada and perhaps the whole British Empire. Attempts to reconcile the Métis were pointless, for they were not at the base of the rebellion. The problem went much deeper and had much more important consequences. Given these beliefs, the expansionists thus felt that the only possible response to continued rebellion was the use of force. Moreover, as the Globe concluded, the rebellion was not a popular uprising, and the use of troops would thus not put Canada “in the unpleasant position of oppressors forcing an unpopular government upon a protesting people.” Military action would simply ensure the wishes of the majority of people of Red River were carried out while, at the same time, stopping those who “for merely selfish purposes” sought to overthrow “British authority and British freedom.” At a meeting of some five thousand citizens in April, 1870, the mayor of Toronto warned that the British Empire might employ troops to “put down that miserable creature... who attempts to usurp authority at Fort Garry.” As the months went by, the rhetoric of expansionism indicated a growing willingness, even enthusiasm, for the use of military force.

The official government approach remained much more conciliatory. Further, many government officials blamed leading expansionists, especially William McDougall, Charles Mair and John Schultz, for their provocative actions. The expansionists replied with their own increasingly harsh criticisms. Macdonald was blamed for his abandonment of McDougall and his refusal to accept the transfer of the territory from Britain until peace was restored. Joseph Howe, the Nova Scotian cabinet minister and former anti-confederationist, was suspected of secretly encouraging the rebellion during his visit to the settlement shortly before it began. In this climate of bitterness and mutual recrimination, expansionists began to feel increasingly estranged from the government and to perceive themselves as an unjustly vilified minority within the nation. It seemed that only Ontario had enough national patriotism to create a forceful demand for the suppression of the rebellion. Other parts of the Dominion and the government itself delayed and hesitated while Canada’s future remained in danger.

The charges that began to circulate in the spring of 1870 gave this sense of bitterness more concrete form. In the wake of the execution of Thomas Scott by Riel, the Canadian government reluctantly decided that a military expedition to the North West was necessary. From the expansionist perspective such an expedition was of the utmost importance. They had called for a show of force from the beginning, and Scott’s death added a new emotionalism to these demands. Scott had been martyred for his loyalty and “humble though his position was — yet he was a Canadian; his mental gifts may have been few — yet he died for us.” As preparations were undertaken
for the expedition, however, many individuals began to suspect that there was an element in the government working to hamper it. Single out were prominent French-Canadian politicians, including George Cartier, Minister of Militia. Those who supported the use of force saw in Cartier and his allies a “party which opposed in every possible manner the departure of the expedition.”

Complicating matters was an increasing public opposition in French Canada to the use of such force. As attitudes in Ontario grew increasingly militant in the wake of Scott’s death, many French Canadians became wary of the motivation which lay behind such vehemence. Naturally sensitive to the intolerance often exhibited by English-Canadian Protestantism, they had little difficulty in accepting the Métis rationale for the rebellion at face value. The Métis were, with good reason, simply seeking guarantees that their religious and linguistic rights would be protected under the new order. A military expedition seemed both unnecessary and oppressive, and many French Canadians protested against the decision to send one.

To the expansionists and to a good many other English Canadians, however, such a position was treasonable. More and more, the wrath of Ontario public opinion turned its attention from Fenians and foreign agents to those within Canada who would oppose their militant brand of expansion. French-Canadian opposition to the expedition, the Globe warned, contained within it an ominous principle:

If British troops cannot go on British territory wherever the authorities desire to send them without being denounced as butchers and filibusterers by fellow subjects, things must be in a poor way. If that can’t be done in Red River, it can’t in Quebec, and if the latter doctrine is held, by all means let it be advanced, but it is just as well to have it understood that a good many pounds will be spent, and a good many lives lost before it will be acquiesced in.

Expansionists believed that Howe and others, for personal reasons, might have worked to thwart the interests of Canada. In the growing hostility of French Canada, however, they perceived a movement of much larger proportions and much greater significance.

The racial and religious implications of the Red River rebellion had never been far below the surface. The priests, accused of participation in the insurrection, had brought the issue of the Catholic religion into the question from the beginning. The Métis had often been rather loosely referred to as the “French party” and that term, in turn, used as a description of the rebellious elements in the settlement. On the other hand, expansionists had tried to play down the popular support for the rebellion by portraying the rebels as a small segment of even the French half-breeds. John Schultz, for instance, made a point at the public rally in Toronto of distinguishing between the rebels and
the loyal French half-breed elements in Red River.⁵⁴ Also, William McDougall had initially seen the clerical involvement in the rebellion as a result of the fact that most of them were foreign born.⁵⁵ Thus, if religious and racial undertones were present throughout the rebellion, they were muted.

The debate over the military expedition brought these undertones to the surface. The process was a dialectic one. French Canada objected to Ontario demands for the use of force against a people which it felt was, whether in a correct manner or not, simply trying to protect itself. Ontario expansionists, seeing the complaints of the Métis as a subterfuge for more malignant ends, took the French-Canadian opposition to the expedition as a sign of disloyalty. The muted racial friction increased until it became a dominant ingredient of Canadian politics.

By July, 1870, it was being argued not only that French Canada opposed the expedition but that, unless loyalists acted quickly, the force would never reach Red River. Canada First members George Denison and R.G. Haliburton saw a devious plot on the part of Cartier and his cohorts to give Riel an amnesty and recall the force before it reached Red River. Warning was given by these “loyalists” that any such attempt would meet massive resistance from Toronto and that Cartier and Taché, scheduled to arrive in Toronto, would be confronted by hostile crowds. Shortly afterwards another huge rally was called, and there the honour of the Empire and the suppression of rebellion were again demanded.⁵⁶ Once again the cry of treason had been raised but in this case the traitors were identified as French-Canadian cabinet members rather than the rebels themselves.

The slightly ludicrous hysterics of Denison and Haliburton indicate the change which had taken place in the analysis of the rebellion by the summer of 1870. Between March, when news of Scott’s death first created widespread support for the use of force, and July the focus in the conspiratorial analysis of the rebellion shifted. Fenians and Hudson’s Bay Company officials remained involved but it was the role of the priests that was assuming the greatest significance. Their role in the rebellion became much clearer once it was believed that French Canada was also involved. The two forces, linked through their common language and religion, were in league. Their joint goal was, as McDougall warned his constituents after his return to Canada, to have “the North-West made into a French Catholic Colony, with special restrictions on all their inhabitants.”⁵⁷ The Toronto Globe, replying angrily to criticism of Ontario’s militancy in the Quebec press, charged that “the fanatics are the French Canadians, who are striving to obtain for themselves peculiar and exclusive privileges.”⁵⁸

In a complex psychological process brought on by French-Canadian opposition to Ontario militancy, the conspiratorial figures of Red
River were transferred from the North West to Canada. It was the story of the established church, clergy reserves and anti-democratic privileges for the minority all over again. French Canada had allied itself with the priests of Red River in order to prevent the natural development of British civilization and to preserve autocratic rule. And the expansionists argued that rule by the Catholic church, as surely as by the Hudson’s Bay Company, would “lock up the splendid country under a more odious tyranny than that which has long ruled it.”

French Canada had come to be considered as much of a danger as the Hudson’s Bay Company to the sort of Protestant commercial culture which the expansionists envisaged for the North West.

The expansionists’ fears concerning the West were reinforced by the government’s proposed Manitoba Act, first introduced to Parliament on May 2, 1870. The boundaries of the new province, the educational system and those clauses which set aside land for the Métis were seen as further evidence of a conspiracy to create a French Catholic province in the North West. The Act prompted McDougall to bring his view of the rebellion to the floor of the House of Commons. Over shouts of opposition he charged that “the rebellion in the North West originated with the Roman Catholic priesthood” and that “the priesthood desired to secure certain advantages for themselves, their Church or their people.”

Captain G. L. Huyshe, a member of the Red River expedition, envisaged dire consequences were the Act to succeed and warned that if any land were given to the Métis “it is probable that a large portion of it will eventually fall into the hands of the Roman Catholic church.” It would thus gain “an undue preponderance of wealth and power” in Manitoba. To many the overall implications of the Manitoba Act were clear enough. Its designs threatened by Wolseley’s advancing troops, French Canada had attempted one final time to gain what it had sought from the beginning. The Manitoba Act was nothing more than “a Bill to establish a French half-breed and foreign ecclesiastical supremacy in Manitoba.”

Two implications flowed from the shift of attention from conspiracies in Red River to those in Ottawa and Quebec. First, the French Catholic nature of the Métis was emphasized. Previously, as has been argued, the Métis tie to the wilderness was seen as the dominant factor in shaping their character. During the controversy surrounding the rebellion, however, this changed. As agents, whether wittingly or unwittingly, of French Canada and the Catholic church, the Métis’ connection with French Canada began to be stressed. This shift was apparent in both French and English Canada. The continual references in the Ontario press to the “French party” had led French Canadians to identify with the Métis to an extent unknown before the resistance. The year 1870 was only the beginning of a period which would see French Canadians increasingly associate the cause
of the Métis and their leader, Louis Riel, with the rights of French Canadians.

The second implication for the expansionists was that only Ontario possessed the true spirit of Canadian nationalism. After all, they argued, only in Ontario had there been strong support for annexation of the North West and forceful suppression of the rebellion. If necessary, that province would have to abrogate to itself the development of the North West in the name of Canada, in the same way that Canada had claimed it in the name of the Empire. It was Ontario, as Schultz pointed out, from which “this movement to add Red River to the Dominion commenced; it was in Ontario this expression of indignation was expressed.” It was therefore, he concluded, “to Ontario the Territory properly belonged.” The rebellion made explicit what had been implicit all along—the regional nature of Canadian expansionism.

While the arrival of the expeditionary force in Red River in August, 1870, ended the actual rebellion, its legacy was to be felt for many years to come. The soldiers of that force and those immigrants who followed them brought to Manitoba a set of suspicions which continually threatened to destroy the racial and religious balance which the Canadian government had recognized in Manitoba. Contributing to this tension was the tendency of the Canadian volunteers stationed in Winnipeg to assume the right to mete out justice to those associated with the rebellion. The tragic climax of such vigilante action occurred when a former supporter of Riel drowned in the Red while attempting to flee pursuing militiamen. Thereafter violence declined, but there were sporadic outbreaks as religious and racial frictions prompted individuals to refight the rebellion of 1870.

Such individual violence was only a symptom of a general suspicion that French-Canadian attempts to turn Manitoba into a Catholic province had not ended with the collapse of the rebellion. Expansionists and nationalists continued to watch for signs of government or individual activity against English Canadians in Manitoba. Typical was Denison’s warning to Schultz that the Ontario troops would be sent back east on some pretext rather than be allowed to disband in Manitoba and thus contribute to the permanent English population there. Haliburton, not to be outdone, wrote Macdonald angrily when he heard that a French Canadian was to be appointed to the bench in Manitoba. Such an appointment, he argued, would simply aid Quebec in its attempts “at making Manitoba a New Quebec with French laws.” Suspicions of racial bias in Manitoba, distrust of the federal government and the question of amnesty for Riel perpetuated and deepened the attitude created by the rebellion itself. In the process eastern politics and prejudice were not only taken West but found there an ultimate test of the strength of the various factions:
Manitoba has been to us on a small scale what Kansas was to the United States. It has been the battle-ground for our British and French elements with their respective religions, as Kansas was the battleground for Free Labour and Slavery. Ontario has played a part in the contests there analogous to New England, Quebec to that of the southern States. 68

While the specific analogy may have been inappropriate, the comment was a perceptive one for it revealed how the resistance had been transformed by expansionist perceptions of it. The argument has been made that “the most persistent social theme of the Prairies has been the struggle for cultural dominance.” 69 If so, then the events surrounding 1870 mark a decisive stage in the development of that theme. Expansionists saw in the resistance and its aftermath a contest between French and English in Canada for a dominant position in the West. Moreover, the events of the rebellion had proven to their satisfaction that French Canada had been willing to sacrifice or distort the development of the region for its own ends. It was thus impossible, expansionists believed, to entrust a heritage as important as the West to such a group. Not only was it necessary to have an eastern agricultural order dominant in Manitoba, but it also had to be English and Protestant. And as Kansas became a testing ground for dominance in the American West, so Manitoba became one for the Canadians. “Prairie culture,” it has been noted, “developed from a Manitoba base.” 70 Expansionists seem to have sensed this would be the case and they were thus determined to assert their dominance there in order to ensure their influence over the rest of the Prairies.

The racial strife which marked Manitoba’s entry into Canada gradually subsided. The settlement of the question of amnesty for Riel, whether satisfactory or not, removed this contentious issue from the daily papers. In the same period legal and political institutions were firmly established under the governorship of Adams Archibald and his successor, Alexander Morris. Most importantly, the continuing inflow of population from Ontario gave assurance to English Canada that its culture would dominate in the new province and thus eased fears of a French-Canadian plot. 71 It was perhaps symbolic of the triumph of the Canada Party in old Red River that as early as 1872 Morris recommended that John Schultz, implacable enemy of the Métis, should be appointed a member of the North West Council. 72 The Manitoba “base” was, within a few years of 1870, increasingly English Canadian and Protestant.

The triumph of one order meant the collapse of the other. While the Province of Manitoba was able to incorporate many elements of old Red River into its social order, the French half-breed was not one of them. In increasing numbers the Métis sought refuge from the civilization of Red River and the intolerance of its new inhabitants. Moving to the still empty banks of the North Saskatchewan they
remained separate representatives of the old order and of a French Catholic tradition. Their respite was to be temporary, however, for the agricultural frontier continued to spread westward and would soon threaten their distinct existence once again. Nor did either side seem to learn much from the experience of 1870. Alexander Morris's warning to Macdonald in 1873 that "the Saskatchewan will require prompt attention, or we will have the same game over again there" went unheeded in the same way as had the warnings of the 1860s.73

NOTES
4 For a more complete description of the nature of Canadian expansionism and the personnel behind it see D. R. Owram, "The Great North West: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Image of the West in the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1976). For convenience the term expansionist will be used henceforth to describe members of the Canada Party, Canada First movement and individuals like Brown and McDougall who strongly opposed the rebellion.
6 See, for instance, Toronto Globe, December 13, 1856; Montreal Gazette, June 6, 1857.
7 Toronto Globe, March 5, 1857. Letter from Isbister.
10 Nor'Wester, January 12, 1869.
11 Alexander Begg, Dot-It-Down (Toronto, 1871) portrays the Nor'Wester as the voice of a few self-interested men.
12 Nor'Wester, November 28, 1864.
13 Public Archives of Manitoba (P.A.M.), Schultz Papers, Box 16, Mair to Schultz, May 14, 1866; B. Chewitt and Co., to Schultz, December 30, 1867 (for a subscription for S. J. Dawson).
14 Nor'Wester, March 5, 1862.
15 Ibid., September 22, 1865; December 1, 1866; July 13, 1867; August 4, 1868.
16 Sandford Fleming, Memorial of the People of Red River to the British and Canadian Governments (Quebec, 1863).
17 Nor'Wester, January 24, 1863.
19 Nor'Wester, December 14, 1862.
20 Toronto Globe, May 28, 1869. Letter from Mair.
23 Toronto Globe, December 4, 1868; February 16, 1869. Letters from Mair.
24 Queen's University Library, Mair Papers, Denison to Mair, March 29, 1869.
26 Ibid., McDougall to Macdonald, October 31, 1869.
27 Nor'Wester, November 23, 1869.
28 P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, McDougall to Macdonald, October 31, 1869.
29 Toronto Globe, November 13, 1869.
30 Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers (1870), Number 12, McDougall to Howe, November 5, 1869.
31 Nor'Wester, February 5, 1862. See also, July 28, 1860; September 28, 1860; May 28, 1862; July 13, 1867; January 12, 1869.
Gluek, *Minnesota and the Manifest Destiny of the Canadian Northwest*, 263–294, discusses American aims in Red River and the impact of these aims on the resistance.

P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, McDougall to McTavish, November 2, 1869.

Dominion of Canada, *Sessional Papers* (1870), Number 12, Schultz to McDougall, November 1869; see also Mair to McDougall, November 8, 1869.

P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, J. Bown to Macdonald, November 26, 1869.

Dominion of Canada, *Sessional Papers* (1870), Number 12, McDougall to Joseph Howe, November 13, 1869.


Toronto *Globe*, January 4, 1870.


*Ibid.*, April 7, 1870.


Toronto *Globe*, December 31, 1869.


W. A. Foster, *Canada First, or, Our New Nationality* (Toronto, 1871), 33.


Toronto *Globe*, May 2, 1870.


Toronto *Globe*, April 7, 1870.

P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, Vol. 102, McDougall to Macdonald, October 31, 1869.


Carleton Place *Herald*, February 9, 1870.

Toronto *Globe*, April 14, 1870.

Carleton Place *Herald*, February 9, 1870. Speech by McDougall.


Huyshe, *The Red River Expedition*, 212. See also *Globe*, April 23, 1870.


Toronto *Globe*, April 7, 1870.


P.A.M., Schultz Papers, Box 16, Denison to Schultz, January 28, 1871.


P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, Vol. 252, Morris to Macdonald, October 1, 1872.

The Flood Hazard at Lumsden, Saskatchewan: Residents' Cognitive Awareness and Personality

Paul Simpson-Housley, Gordon Lipinski and Elroy Trithardt
Department of Geography, University of Regina

ABSTRACT. Six hypotheses concerning the response of residents of Lumsden, Saskatchewan to the hazard of riverine flooding were tested through an interview survey in the fall of 1978. Two of the hypotheses related to the dimension of personality known as locus of control expectancy. The findings were that greater awareness of the flood hazard tends to be found in residents who have experienced previous floods, who have lived longer in the area, whose expectations of the consequence of a future flood include personal loss to themselves, or who rank as internals according to the locus of control scale. Two other hypotheses, when tested, approached but did not attain statistical significance: that knowledge of the flood-control works which have been constructed increases confidence that flooding will not be experienced in the areas protected, and that internals reside outside the floodplain. The implications of the study have considerable relevance to flood-damage reduction programs for the prairies, in that they demonstrate the complexity of individual responses to a local flood hazard. It is concluded that governments engaged in such programs should pay particular attention to the educational and land-use zoning aspects of adjustment to flood hazard.

RESUME
Six hypothèses concernant l'attitude des résidents de Lumsden, Saskatchewan, vis-à-vis des risques d'inondation fluviale, ont été mises à l'épreuve lors d'une enquête réalisée sous forme d'entretiens pendant l'automne 1978. Deux de ces hypothèses s'appliquaient à la dimension de la personnalité désignée par le terme "situation d'expectative de contrôle." Les résultats ont montré que les risques d'inondations semblent être mieux connus des résidents ayant déjà subi des inondations et des riverains de longue date; ce sont ceux qui s'attendent à ce que toute inondation à venir entraîne une perte de leurs biens personnels, ou ceux qui peuvent être considérés comme "internes" selon l'échelle de la situation de contrôle. Deux autres hypothèses, lorsqu'elles ont été mises à l'épreuve, se sont rapprochées d'une signification statistique sans cependant en être une: 1) de savoir que des travaux en vue du contrôle des inondations ont été effectués renforce l'assurance que des inondations n'auront pas lieu dans les zones protégées, et 2) les "internes" résident en dehors de la plaine d'inondation. Les résultats de cette étude sont très pertinents aux programmes de minimisation des dégâts causés par les inondations destinés à la région des Prairies: ils montrent en effet la complexité des réactions individuelles vis-à-vis d'une risque d'inondation locale. On en conclut que les gouvernements participant aux programmes mentionnés précédemment devraient s'intéresser, en particulier, à l'aspect éducatif et à l'aspect de l'utilisation des terrains par zones, se rapportant à l'ajustement aux risques d'inondation.

Introduction
Floodplains have historically been attractive as places for human occupation and activities. Almost every Canadian city has developed along the banks of a river or lake. One unfortunate consequence of this is a susceptibility to flooding, and the prairie region is no exception, as the spring runoff of 1979 has once again demonstrated, especially in southern Manitoba. Environment Canada (1975) estimated that there are at least 43 urban centres in the Canadian prairies with potential river-related flood problems (Figure 1). With increasing concentration of population in urban centres, the costs of flood damages and their prevention have been increasing rapidly and have become the object of great concern. Canadian governments have spent $200 million in the past twenty years on the construction of...
Figure 1. *Prairie Urban Centres Prone to Riverine Flooding.*
flood-protection works and much more for flood relief and rehabilitation. Environment Canada (1978) estimated that in 1974 alone, flood relief and compensation cost various government agencies $60 million. In addition to these costs, there were significant losses of income and interruptions of normal community activities, along with other damages to property, such as summer cottages, which were not eligible for compensation.

Large-scale efforts to combat flood problems did not come until the 1950s, when the federal and provincial governments combined their efforts in cost-sharing programs to reduce flood damage. A first step, initiated by the federal government, was to estimate the probable extent of flooding in flood-prone areas. The study of the prairies conducted by Durrant and Blackwell (1959) was designed to establish more reliable flood probability determination, using a regional approach. They identified several topographic and climatological factors which could be measured and used to derive flood frequency estimates for specific locations.

The procedures adopted to alleviate the flood situation have been basically of two types, employing the use of either structural or non-structural measures. Structural or “flood-control” measures comprise four main approaches used either singly or in combination, including channel improvement, river diversion, dykes or floodwalls, and the use of upstream storage reservoirs. Non-structural or “flood-adjustment” alternatives have received relatively little attention until recently. This second approach involves flood warnings, various forms of emergency measures, compensation for flood damage, and land-use zoning.

Structural measures such as the Red River Floodway, which diverts floodwaters of the Red River around the city of Winnipeg, and which was built at a cost of $63 million shared in a 60–40 ratio by the federal and Manitoba governments (Environment Canada 1975), are enormously expensive, in terms of both construction and maintenance. Moreover, they are no definite guarantee against flooding since an especially severe flood may cause channel or reservoir storage capacities to be exceeded. The problem is further complicated because these structural measures encourage further encroachment of human activities upon the “protected” areas of the floodplain. Also, as memories of a flood fade, there is a frequent tendency to ignore proper maintenance of control works, to develop parts of floodplains not protected by works, and to “improve” drainage upstream, thereby increasing peak flows in some flood-prone areas. When floods do occur, they affect not only those living on the floodplain but also the rest of the population which must bear the costs of compensation. Expensive flood-control projects and disaster assistance are perhaps not the answer to flood problems.
Natural Hazard Research

Awareness by researchers of crucial issues in coping with natural hazards such as floods preceded full recognition of the problem by government bodies. Academic interest in natural hazards was aroused in earnest by American geographers more than two decades ago when it was discovered that extensive flood-control works constructed in the United States had actually caused an increase in flood losses (White et al., 1958). From this study it became apparent that the word “hazard” had to be redefined in human rather than physical terms, and therefore the study of natural hazards expanded to enter the realms of many disciplines, including sociology, economics and psychology. Research broadened to cover many geophysical hazards, such as earthquakes and storms of various kinds, but adopted the view that no hazard exists in isolation from the human adjustment or response to it.

Governments have sometimes found that people have not responded to flood hazard in the way that the governments would wish. As a result, heavy monetary losses have continued. Government schemes have assumed that human response to flood hazard is entirely rational. Yet many people still occupy hazardous riverine or littoral locations, often utilizing denial mechanisms to give themselves a sense of personal immunity to inundation. Such individuals select, organize and interpret information about the hazard through their own senses, and draw from it a picture which is meaningful to them but which is not necessarily congruent with the true nature of the hazard. A better understanding of human response to natural hazards seems vital in the search for better methods of coping with them and reducing the associated financial and other losses. This aspect of natural hazard research has indeed received greater attention in recent years, and flood problems have been to the forefront.

Early studies such as that of Kates (1962) tended to relate people’s perceptions of the nature of a hazard to its frequency and magnitude, and to their personal experience of it. The flood hazard was particularly emphasized, and findings of complex and varied responses led to new directions in the study of hazard perception. In more recent years, personality variables have been included in hazard-perception research in an effort to increase understanding of the adjustment process. Saarinen (1966) included personality as a variable when he considered perception of drought hazard on the Great Plains. He found that farmers who believed that man controls nature were less perceptive of the drought risk than those to whom this interpretation of the state of nature was alien. Sims and Baumann (1972) employed the sentence-completion method of psychological testing to compare residents of Illinois and Alabama in terms of the effectiveness of their coping mechanisms to combat tornado threat. They used a sentence-
completion test to measure locus of control expectancies with the intention of relating this particular dimension of personality, which is discussed later in the present paper, to the respondents' mechanisms for coping with tornado threat. The same dimension of personality was utilized by Simpson-Housley and Bradshaw (1978) who concluded that internals, according to the measure of locus of control, were better adapted than externals to a seismic landscape in Wellington, New Zealand. Internals showed a more realistic appraisal of the potential for seismic damage and a greater preference for preventive action to mitigate earthquake threat.

**Purpose**

The aim of this paper is to study and measure the level of cognitive awareness of residents of Lumsden, Saskatchewan of the hazard of riverine flooding. We also attempt to assess the influence of the locus of control dimension of personality on this awareness. The flood problem at Lumsden is not dissimilar to that experienced by many other prairie communities, in that it results from the rapid rise in river level caused by unusually heavy snowmelt runoff in the spring of certain years.

Interest in this particular site is twofold. Firstly, three severe riverine floods have occurred during the past decade (1969, 1971, 1974), stimulating such a level of public interest that on occasion flood-fighting efforts at Lumsden have received nationwide publicity. These events have prompted the implementation of extensive flood-control measures in the mid-1970s, specifically the construction of large dykes and the excavation of a new and deeper channel for the Qu'Appelle River through the town. Secondly, in contrast with the continuing trend towards the depopulation of many small towns in rural areas of the prairies, Lumsden, with no real economic base of its own, is growing due to its role as a commuter settlement for Regina. Despite the availability of sites located off the floodplain, new residences are being built in the late 1970s on the floodplain itself. Lumsden is thus an ideal location for an investigation of residents' awareness of flood hazard, both in the light of their experience with flooding and their perception of the new measures implemented to control flooding.

**The Study Area**

Lumsden is predominantly a dormitory community for the city of Regina some 27 km distant. The town, with a population of approximately one thousand, is situated on the bottom and sides of the Qu'Appelle River Valley, a former glacial spillway. The valley is deeply incised and has a relatively flat bottom with steep side slopes. The Qu'Appelle River is normally a sluggish stream; it has a broad floodplain and freely developed meanders. Its channel capacity in the
Lumsden area prior to the modifications of the mid-1970s was about 39 cubic metres per second (c.m.s.), although the average discharge is only 4.8 c.m.s. (Qu’Appelle Basin Study Board 1972). Its flood potential develops from the annual spring runoff. Several tributaries upstream from Lumsden, such as Wascana Creek and the Moose Jaw River, drain large areas of southcentral Saskatchewan and are major contributors to the town’s flood threat.

The town of Lumsden has been flooded or threatened by flood fifteen times since 1902. Construction of a series of dykes in the 1920s alleviated some of the problem. Since that time, Lumsden has been seriously threatened by flooding only five times (peak river flows in excess of 120 c.m.s.), in 1955, 1956, 1969, 1971 and 1974 (Environment Canada 1974). In all cases, flood fighting prevented extensive damage. After the 1971 flood the dykes were raised to withstand flows of 210 c.m.s. or the equivalent of a 100-year probable flood. The 1974 flood had a record peak of 468 c.m.s. and only a nationally recognized community effort supported by several hundred volunteers saved the town from inundation.

After the 1974 threat, the construction of flood-protection measures began in earnest. A river diversion project spearheaded the program, and the construction of a higher bridge and higher dykes was included, at a total cost in excess of $1.3 million. This provides Lumsden with a channel capacity of 450 c.m.s., which is the equivalent of a 200-year probable flood.

The Measure of Locus of Control

One of the basic aims of the study was to relate the flood hazard perceptions of Lumsden residents to the personality dimension of locus of control. The concept of locus of control is derived from social learning theory (Rotter 1960). If an individual perceives a reinforcement, gratification or reward for a particular action of his to be contingent upon his own efforts, he will expect a similar reward in the future if he makes the same effort. If, on the other hand, he feels that the attainment of the reward resulted from chance, his expectation of a recurrence of the same reward for the same action is reduced.

Individuals may be designated as either “internals” or “externals” according to their expectancies of locus of control. When an event is interpreted to be mainly if not entirely contingent upon chance, luck, fate or factors outside the actor’s control, this indicates a belief in external control. If the consequences of an event are seen by the actor as contingent upon his decisions or actions, this credence may be labelled as a belief in internal control (Rotter 1966).

Interviews are used to characterize individuals according to Rotter’s scale for measuring locus of control expectancies. Rotter
Plate 1. Flooded floor of the Qu’Appelle Valley at Lumsden, spring runoff, 1974. The town itself was protected by its dykes and the efforts of volunteers.

Plate 2. Floodwaters from Wascana Creek, Regina, spring runoff, 1971.
utilizes 29 pairs of statements, 23 of which pairs are scorable. Respondents select from each pair the statement most in accordance with their beliefs. High scores on the scorable pairs represent externality. The following pairs of statements are included as illustrations; in each case the second alternative represents externality.

1 (a) In the case of the well prepared student there is rarely if ever such a thing as an unfair test.
   (b) Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.

2 (a) Becoming a success is a matter of hard work; luck has little or nothing to do with it.
   (b) Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.

3 (a) The average citizen can have an influence in government decisions.
   (b) The world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much the little guy can do about it.

Estimates of internal consistency for the locus of control test can be described as relatively stable, while test-retest reliability is consistent. Details are provided by Rotter (1966).

Establishment of Hypotheses

Six hypotheses concerning the influence of locus of control expectancies and other selected variables on perception of the flood hazard were established:

1. Increased cognitive awareness of the flood hazard is a positive function of past flood experience.
2. Increased cognitive awareness of the flood hazard is a positive function of length of occupancy in the area.
3. Increased cognitive awareness of the flood hazard is a positive function of expectation of personal loss.
4. Knowledge of flood-protection measures increases confidence in protected areas as places for human occupancy.
5. Locating residences outside the floodplain is a positive function of expectancies for internal locus of control.
6. Increased cognitive awareness of the flood hazard is a positive function of expectancies for internal locus of control.

Studies elsewhere have demonstrated the assumptions contained in Hypotheses 1, 2 and 4, while we have relied on intuition for the derivation of Hypothesis 3. Since internals have a greater belief than externals in their control over their destiny and environment, and since their awareness of environmental hazard is higher than that
of externals (Simpson-Housley and Bradshaw 1978), it was hypothesized that internals would exhibit a proclivity for locating their residences off the floodplain (Hypothesis 5). It has also been demonstrated that internality on the locus of control dimension of personality is associated with greater cognitive awareness. Thus Hypothesis 6 was formulated.

**Method**

A questionnaire designed to elicit data from which the hypotheses could be tested was administered through personal interviews with Lumsden residents in the fall of 1978. The questionnaire was based on one described by White (1974) and on Rotter's locus of control questionnaire. Each interview lasted approximately twenty minutes. A blanket survey of households in the town was attempted. Every residence and workplace was approached with the purpose of obtaining an interview. One hundred and twenty-seven households or workplaces had someone at home or on duty at the time of the survey; there were six refusals. This gave a sample size of approximately 12 per cent of the total population or 33 per cent of households and workplaces. Eighty-five respondents interviewed had property on the floodplain and 36 were outside the floodplain. Respondents included 44 males and 77 females, but according to Rotter (1966) sex differences in locus of control expectancies are minimal.

From the distribution of locus of control scores, cutting points were chosen to divide the sample into three groups of approximately equal numbers. Respondents whose scores on Rotter's locus of control scale fell below the 33rd percentile point were termed internals, those between the 33rd percentile point and the 66th percentile point were designated as moderates, and those whose scores were higher than the 66th percentile point were classified as externals. Personality types were then related to their responses to the questionnaire on flood hazard. Chi-square tests were used to assess the probability of differences between groups resulting from sampling error. A significance level of 0.05 (one-tail) was accepted.

Respondents' awareness of flood hazard was measured as high, medium, or low on the basis of answers to questions ascertaining respondents' cognitive knowledge concerning past floods in the area, the probability of flood recurrence, and the flood-protection measures which have been installed.

**Results**

Table 1 shows the results achieved in the testing of the hypotheses. Increased cognitive awareness of the flood hazard on the part of Lumsden residents is indeed a positive function of past flood experience (Hypothesis 1). This finding is closely associated with the con-
clusion that more accurate cognitive awareness of the flood hazard is a positive function of a longer period of occupancy in the area (Hypothesis 2). Only sixteen of the respondents had not lived in the area sufficiently long to have observed the 1974 flood. As anticipated, both of these hypotheses reached acceptable significance levels although it is striking that Hypothesis 1 reached significance only among the floodplain residents. These findings are consonant with those of numerous studies of floodplain residents in the United States.

**TABLE 1—RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Chi-square value</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Awareness pos. function of past flood experience (on floodplain)</td>
<td>15.10</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Awareness pos. function of length of occupance in area</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Awareness pos. function of expectation of personal loss (on floodplain)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Knowledge of flood-protection measures increases confidence (not signif.)</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Locating residences off floodplain characteristic of internals (not signif.)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Awareness is greater among internals</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was also contended that awareness of the flood hazard is a positive function of the expectation of personal loss resulting from inundation (Hypothesis 3). As anticipated, among the floodplain residents there was a strong correlation between high awareness and high expectation of future loss. Similar results with regard to earthquake hazard were obtained from respondents in Wellington, New Zealand by Simpson-Housley and Bradshaw (1978). Thus increased cognition of the hazard concerned is in both cases associated with personal expectations. Those who do not anticipate that they will themselves experience hazard-related losses in the future tend to be those with lower awareness of the actual nature of the hazard.

The next postulate attempted to measure the respondents' reactions to the new flood-control measures (Hypothesis 4). Sixty-nine per cent of the floodplain residents considered the town to be safe from flooding, while 85 per cent of those living off the floodplain concurred. However, the hypothesis that knowledge that flood-protection measures have been taken increases confidence in protected areas as places for human occupancy did not achieve significance, although it approached it closely.

Plate 4. Summer thunderstorms such as this fine example photographed from the University of Regina in August 1975 are occasional producers of heavy but localized flooding on the prairies.
It was hypothesized that locating residences outside the floodplain is a positive function of internal locus of control (Hypothesis 5). Since internals generally expect the pattern of their life to result from their own actions, the decision to locate outside the floodplain is a rational approach for them. On the other hand, externals attribute consequences to forces outside their control and consider nature less predictable than do internals; so the decision to locate on the floodplain would be less inconsistent for them than it would be for internals. Hypothesis 5 approached significance, and it may be averred that with a larger sample significance would have been achieved.

It was also contended that increased cognitive awareness of the flood hazard is a positive function of internal locus of control (Hypothesis 6). In this case significance was reached. Previous research has demonstrated that cognitive awareness is positively associated with generalized expectancies for internal locus of control (Seeman 1963). The apparent greater awareness of flood hazard demonstrated by internals could therefore be a function of their own internality.

Discussion and Implications

Significance was achieved in four out of the six hypotheses, and the trend in the other two was in the predicted direction. Better cognitive awareness of flood hazard is associated with greater experience of past floods, a longer period of occupancy in the flood-prone area, and an expectation of personal loss from future flooding; it is also a positive function of internal locus of control. Therefore the individual's particular level of awareness is a function of his personality and of local factors derived from both the physical and social environment.

Various levels of government in the prairies have been involved in efforts to reduce flood losses over the years, employing both structural and non-structural approaches. But the national Flood Damage Reduction Program, announced by Ottawa in 1975, is the first major co-ordinated attempt to emphasize non-structural adjustments to flood hazard. Through the flood damage reduction agreements negotiated between the federal and each of the three prairie provincial governments, it is promoting these new approaches to flooding problems on the prairies. Our findings in this study of the Lumsden flood-response situation have a number of relevant implications.

First, since accurate knowledge of the flood hazard is contingent upon past experience of floods and upon the length of time a person has lived in an area, it follows that recent arrivals in a flood-prone location are liable to underestimate the flood threat. This is a particularly important point since a large segment of the Canadian population is geographically very mobile. Thus there is a need for the effective dissemination of accurate information about the flood risk
— in other words, an educational program. Such a program should be aimed not only at new arrivals in a flood-prone location but also at its general population, for the possession of more accurate information may lead externals towards the behaviour characteristic of internals, and therefore into more rational responses to flood hazard. This program might be promulgated through the local media. Hazard awareness in general should certainly be incorporated into school curricula so that students may be made fully cognizant of methods to cope with any environmental threat which may affect their local area.

Some progress in the direction of educational programs concerning flood risk has already been made. The national Flood Damage Reduction Program (Environment Canada 1978) involves the making and distribution of maps to inform residents of flood-prone areas of the extent of past floods and the probability of future inundations in varying degrees of severity. Flood-risk maps for Moose Jaw and for Carman, Manitoba were produced in 1977, and one is planned for Lumsden. Through this scheme, the general level of knowledge of flood hazard on the part of floodplain residents in many centres across the prairies should be raised. Additional information on non-structural adjustments to flooding is being included in brochures which accompany the maps. Governments might also compel real estate agents to provide full information to prospective buyers in hazardous areas. When floodplain residents have been exposed to all the risk information available, the governments will have done their duty.

Secondly, the investigation of the role of locus of control expectancies—a personality dimension—in perception of the flood hazard at Lumsden suggests that, even with full and accurate information at their disposal, there are some who will make inappropriate judgements in terms of their response to the flood risk. They may choose to minimize the risk in their own minds, or they may erroneously believe that flood-control works give complete protection. Thus governments must be prepared to go beyond the role of disseminators of information and to adopt more definite measures. The current campaign to promote more widespread zoning of land use to reduce flood losses is therefore seen to be very appropriate, as is the decision that federal agencies such as Central Mortgage and Housing and the Department of Regional Economic Expansion will not provide financial assistance for new developments in areas “designated” as flood-risk locations under the federal-provincial mapping programs.

In general, the new adjustment rather than structural approach to flood damage reduction is strongly supported by the study at Lumsden. In closing, however, it must be remembered that flood problems on the prairies may result from causes other than rivers
swollen by spring snowmelt. The flash flooding resulting from occasional severe summertime thunderstorms is a case in point, and can affect locations far away from any river floodplain. The severe flood at Regina on June 25, 1975, is the most striking recent example. Lumsden itself suffered severe basement flooding and inundation of the market-garden district adjoining the town in a thunderstorm of May 24, 1977, which dumped 150 mm of rain in two hours. Prairie flood problems will never be totally eradicated, but the application of hazard perception research techniques and of new remedies in the riverine and lakeshore locations where flood hazard can be realistically estimated promises a large step in the right direction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to acknowledge the help given by Craig Marchinko in collecting data.

REFERENCES


Book Reviews


This is a book produced by a committee working under very tight time constraints. It is not a “camel,” the traditional result of a committee's labour. The editor, the co-ordinator, the designer, Centax of Canada Ltd., Regina and a number of Regina citizens deserve the warmest thanks and, indeed, high praise for producing an attractive, comprehensive and entertaining work on Regina before the yesterday of 1945. The work is divided into three parts, covering the periods 1882–1903, 1903–1914 and 1914–1945. Ian Wilson's foreword explains the background to the book project, one part of the City's 75th Anniversary celebrations, and pays appropriate tribute to all who assisted. Dr. Brennan gives a concise, well-written history of Regina as an Introduction. There is a good bibliography and the work carries appropriate photo credits. The cover photo of this 9” x 12” work is of the stately old Regina City Hall, as it appeared in 1927.

This book was prepared and published as a visual history. It was not intended as a narrative work nor as an illustrated history. One cannot compare it fairly then with recent illustrated histories of Winnipeg and Calgary save in such general areas as balance, workmanship and visual appeal. In this history photographs and photographic reproductions are expected to tell the story whilst brief items from printed sources provide the necessary identification and an agreeable linkage.

*Regina Before Yesterday* portrays the growth of Regina from its beginnings as a tent and shack settlement through the vicissitudes of the railway era, the pioneer era, the era of industrial and commercial development, cyclone, war, growth, drought and a second war period. The strength of the book lies in its balance, in the evidences of good fortune and bad times, of rich man and poor man, of work, recreation, sport and quiet beauty. The visual and the written accompaniment reveal the same sense of proportion. There was little enough in the beginning to suggest that Regina would thrive, increase, develop into a thing of beauty. So much of the beautiful was man-made, so unforeseen were the results that Reginans are still prone to be somewhat apologetic over the lack of mountains, the width of Wascana Creek and the narrow streets of the downtown core. On the other hand the Legislative Building, the parks and the playgrounds deserve and receive the visitor's praise.

Newcomers to Regina will enjoy the book. Readers in far places
will appreciate it as a record of human achievement. Old timers will revel in it. It is a good book, both attractive and interesting, and even the reader not caught up personally in the history will find himself or herself reacting to the challenges and relieved with the successes. To the old-timer who lived the history, the book will recall a host of memories, a wealth of familiar things. Not all the remembrances will be happy. This history reveals a grim side. One of the most poignant photographs (p. 198) is that of the drought and dust, and Mrs. Barlay’s description on the following page is stark enough. One of the most striking photographs is that of the building that never was — the Grand Trunk Pacific Hotel.

From any vantage point this book is a success. It reveals the vulnerability of a centre set “in a boundless plain,” subject directly to the rigours of climate and the vagaries of markets. In some ways the Saskatchewan Roughriders (earlier, the Regina Roughriders) have mirrored the city’s progress. The earlier black and red uniform, mud and blood, has given way to green and white, though the meaning of the “white” is obscure. The history gives fair acknowledgement of the part played by the “Roughies.” Indeed, it shows a fair balance of sport, recreation, education and the arts. The Legislative Building reminds the reader that Regina is the capital city. The downtown business area reminds the reader that city and rural fortunes are inextricably connected. My reaction to a close reading of the book was to hope that someone may now be planning Regina: Yesterday and Today as a companion piece to bring the story to 1980 — the 75th Anniversary of the province.

John H. Archer
Professor of Western History
Saskatchewan Archives Board


The foreword to this well written and visually attractive work informs the reader that it is one of a number of such publications which will make up The History of Canadian Cities Series. Alan F. J. Artibise, author of *Winnipeg: An Illustrated History*, is the General Editor of the series. The series itself is a project of the History Division, National Museum of Man (National Museums of Canada), the stated purpose of which is to “provide the public with information on Canadian cities in an attractive, stimulating and readable form.” A laudable goal, indeed!
This illustrated history of Calgary traces the growth and development of that city from the founding as a police outpost in 1875 to the year 1965. There are a goodly number of excellent photographs which supplement a well-written text. This book and its companion piece, Winnipeg: An Illustrated History, set a high standard.

Regina readers will be interested in the decisive role played by the Canadian Pacific Railway in locating the station site in Calgary. Furthermore, the decision to build the railway across the southern prairies rather than along the original more northerly route in itself ensured Calgary's continued survival. No doubt this explains the enthusiasm displayed by early boosters for railways— an enthusiasm which saw a railway line projected from Calgary to the Arctic Ocean!

Indeed, Calgary had its share of enthusiastic boosters. The city was touted as the potential rival to the American railway-livestock centre, Chicago. The fires of such optimism were fanned further when Pat Burns established a meat-packing empire, centred in the city. Calgary citizens confidently expected their city to be selected as capital of the newly created province of Alberta, and the centre certainly had many sound claims to that honour. But in the opinion of the selectors, apparently, "Calgary skies and Tory blue" were too closely linked and the capital went to "Liberal" Edmonton. Calgarians would suggest that something of the same sense of colouring influenced the decision to site the provincial university in the more northerly city.

The author explains the pervasive British influence exhibited in manners, dress, sports, clubs and society generally. He explains the marked American influence in upper strata of civic society, quite out of proportion to the numerical strength of the American contingent. He deals forthrightly with bias shown Indians, Chinese, and continental Europeans. His account of the Rosalie case in 1889 is revealing, as are his comments on the actions of early police chiefs. I found of particular interest his account of the rise of the labour movement in Calgary and the appeal which the Social Credit gospel appeared to have for the working man. Indeed, it must have been inexplicable to the C.C.F. supporters that an administration priding itself on its businesslike practices should have been treated with scepticism by many businessmen yet supported warmly by the workers.

The reader is not surprised that Calgary entered a period of phenomenally rapid growth after 1948. All the essential elements for such material advance were there, as the author explains. The combined thrust of ranching, oil play, boosterism intermixed with management skills and civic support made Calgary the city most nearly associated with the idea of American materialism. Civic politics and city growth fitted into this concept.

I read this book with much interest. It shows evidence of solid
research and the writing is consistently clear and lucid. I do raise some queries on the balance of the work. Nowhere does the writer introduce the reader to housewife, labourer or artist. What was the price of a loaf of bread in 1925? What was the wage level in 1935? What of libraries, art galleries, hospitals, air service? One final query! How could any author write of Calgary in the post-1945 era and omit mention of the Grey Cup victory of 1948? Not that the win itself was so worthy of mention but the invasion of staid Toronto by Calgary supporters said more for the Calgary image than a score of pamphlets. The event focussed national attention on the foothills city. The photograph on page 151 hardly covers the development of football as a professional sport!

John H. Archer
Professor of Western History
Saskatchewan Archives Board


Few of the contemporary writers about the Métis of Western Canada have attempted to define their contemporary identity.

Arguments have been provided about the use or misuse of the term Métis, but materials concerning the Métis people’s use of the term vis-à-vis themselves are scarce. In his volume on Reformulation of an Ethnic Identity Sawchuk attempts to show that the contemporary identity that the Métis promote towards Canadian society is no longer based upon historical events of 1870 and 1885. His thesis is simply that the main ingredient uniting the Métis of today is their economic poverty and not an attachment to Cuthbert Grant, Dumont or Riel.

Sawchuk provides the reader with a detailed description of the disintegration of Métis cultural identity through several periods within their history — a cultural identity that today has been reformulated by cultural and economic factors. His basic theory is that the growth of modern Métis political organizations has been the determining force in reformulating this new Métis ethnic consciousness.

Métis ethnicity or identity is no longer based on traditional indicators since this new consciousness has absorbed within itself many natives and whites who are not inheritors of the traditional Métis identity. Thus the contemporary term “Métis” has no relationship to its historical meaning. Since non-status Indians and whites married to Indian or Métis women are now included within the “corporate”
definition, it becomes obvious that the term “Métis,” as used today by Métis people, has little if any attachment to history.

Sawchuk argues at length that Métis ancestral cultural traits have all but vanished and that those remaining in the folklore are rather insignificant. Thus, he argues that economic poverty is the main ingredient for their new identity and their unity, and for the rise of Métis organizations representing a diverse collection of mixed bloods. In the process a reformulation of their new identity developed, eventually leading to the “raison d’être” of the organizations.

What is lacking in Sawchuk’s thesis, however, is a discussion of the split that has occurred within the Métis population regarding the Manitoba Métis Federation (M.M.F.) and the repercussions the split has had in Métis communities. Sawchuk does not expand his point about the many Métis people who have not joined the M.M.F. because of their belief that the organization represents non-status Indians. Furthermore, many locals are closed to other Métis people because relatives have been able to get together nine members to form a local; they can then elect their own executive and decide among themselves whom to allow in and whom not to.

Many French speaking Métis in Manitoba do not want to associate with “les sauvages,” nor do some of the Cree, Saulteaux, Chipewyan or Sioux-speaking Métis want anything to do with “French-Canadians” (a term used to describe French-speaking Métis during the debate about two pages of the newspaper “Le Métis” being in French). Thus, disunity from within exists on cultural matters, a point that Sawchuk does not fully develop or at times discuss.

Though his thesis on economic poverty is well taken, Sawchuk should have reflected on the number of people who became “Métis” when grants became abundant. In other words, many Métis people became Métis (i.e., paid $1.00 membership to M.M.F.) when housing, fishing and educational grants became available. Once grants had been allocated, many Métis who received them no longer participated actively in the organization; others who did not receive any grants became hostile not only towards the organization but also towards those Métis who did.

Sawchuk has presented relevant evidence to support his “economic poverty” argument, but one must remember that the Métis are a fragmented group wherein each community sees itself as uniquely Métis — in other words, any Métis organization represents only the Métis who have decided to join — the sad fact being that the majority of the Métis population has not joined. It is they who still cling to their history for identity.

Antoine S. Lussier
Native Studies Department
Brandon University

Along the whole of the long shelf of books, monographs, and public reports on the Canadian grain marketing experience this book easily takes primacy of place. Dr. Wilson has given us our legacy exhaustively documented, interlaced with solid commentary based on his intimate experience over the two decades from 1930 to 1951. The whole period is presented with such astonishing clarity and grace that it comes as a surprise that the events he treats ended nearly thirty years ago.

The book is of formidable size. A first glance convinces the reader that it is probably impregnable as well. Those with an interest in the subject will be richly served by penetrating it, and both the author's organization of the material and the publisher's cover photograph and skillful format encourage the effort. It is a work we needed, and both the author and publisher undertook great responsibility to present it to us. Every serious thinker of the Canadian experience owes it to his understanding to have this book within reach.

Charles Wilson's life amongst the grain policy makers is the ingredient which gives this book its flavour. But experience alone could not do it, for it is not an anecdotal record. To give us this book he has developed the essential qualities of a literary mole and combined them in his experience with those of a sage. In spite of the disclaimer on the cover that he "concentrates on exposition rather than appraisal," it is his appraisal which breathes life and relevance into the work. His skill in separating out the portions bearing his appraisal creates the format which makes this book an essential tool for grain industry veterans and tyros interested in the whole fascinating Canadian national experience.

There are, in this book, four chapters (out of 48) which serve both as sufficient commentary in themselves, and as a lever to pry open specific issues or time periods between 1871 and 1951. The four chapters, numbered 11, 22, 35 & 48 and totalling only some 36 pages, are set pieces. In order to conform to the chronological structure of the book, they are given unassuming titles which obscure the true quality of the contents. Each is a commentary on the processes of the political economy of grain in Canada, and on grain's primacy of place amongst the energizers of national economic growth. These four pieces show clearly that this is not, in spite of appearances, a Western book. Quite clearly the important action was not on the Prairies. The region was incapable of controlling the marketing of its products, and passed the task to the Ottawa political and bureaucratic establishment which, according to the record revealed here, worked hard to achieve stable
and adequate prairie farm income in quiet ways often unappreciated by the growers.

Supporting the analytical presentation of the book, one other short chapter must be noted. It is a unique essay of four and a half pages, Chapter 36, at the beginning of Part IV. It sets the whole farm income issue squarely against the exigencies of wartime fiscal necessity. It is here that Wilson builds his analysis of grain policy around the concept of “surplus psychology.” For thirty years farm income support was the main goal of agricultural policy, a policy necessary to the economic well-being of the whole of the nation, including its industrial heartland. From 1920 on, every legislative and regulatory move, every farm agitation, began and continued under the fear of grain surplus, low prices, and inadequate income.

The exogenous circumstances of the Second World War brought resounding success to the farm income policy. Under the buoyant conditions of favorable yields and strong overseas demand, prairie farm income reached levels so high that the stability of wartime fiscal policy was endangered. The “surplus psychology” had to be set aside, and thirty years of experience spawned by it had to be rapidly reversed. The measures devised, the experimentation and innovation demonstrated under wartime pressure are reviewed in this short piece. It serves to incite the student of grain to delve into the detail supplied in the foregoing Part III, and to proceed to discover whether the policy switch has had inappropriate permanent effects in the post-war period, even to the present.

To emphasize the scholarly interpretive and analytical portions of the book in a review is not to minimize the contribution to the subject made by the bulk of the other chapters. Wilson displays consistently the mole-like qualities which true scholarship demands and which happily in this instance are not a substitute for scholarship. One must admire the persistence which this effort must have demanded. To select from the record the supporting material for the main issues, and to meld it into the orderly and cohesive text which is presented calls for the most dogged devotion to the task.

This devotion furnishes a wealth of accurate detail fully and comprehensively presented. There emanates from it the strong, if intangible, impression that Wilson lived a life he loved—at least in retrospect. These pages are the mosaic tiles of his life, although his face appears but rarely in the design. One can wholly admire an active player turned writer and scholar, who can replay his career scene by scene and see it integrated into the larger scheme of things. This ineffable sense of his being there is what breathes life into the long, long record.

What will we do for the years of active grain experience from 1951 on? Full and complete as Wilson’s record is, it is unfinished. The story
of the C. D. Howe years, the turmoil over returning surplus and fear of surplus, and the contentious issues of farm income today, now that export grain has yielded its place as the national economic dynamo, should not have to wait thirty more years to be told. But the telling will be difficult, inevitably held up to the measure of the quality of this work by Wilson.

Fred Anderson
Department of Economics
University of Regina


In the introduction to this book, J. G. MacGregor states that "history is a sum of stories." He adheres to this statement. The book is not a biography in the accepted meaning of the word. Even the names of Rowand’s parents have not been included, surely an unusual omission.

The book describes the sequence of events as they unfold in Western Canada from 1803 to Rowand’s death in 1854. Rowand first served the North West Company and, after the amalgamation, was appointed a Chief Factor in the Hudson’s Bay Company with headquarters at Fort Edmonton. During his fifty years in the fur trade he met and knew intimately many of the elite of Rupert’s Land — David Thompson, Alexander Henry, Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière, Painted Feather, and George Simpson. Their explorations, exploits and pecadilloes are interwoven to create a vivid word-picture of life on the plains.

The author has a deep affection for the prairie provinces, and a discerning eye. Only one who has walked or driven over many of the trails could write, “After the gloomy forest-locked valley, the very openness of the prairie slopes and the brightness of the big sky lent a new lift to the travelers as they emerged into the parklands of Canada’s vast prairie region.”

Mr. MacGregor, with his knowledge of the fur trade, never becomes so enamoured with Rowand that he loses his awareness of what is happening away from centre stage. As in a well-crafted play, everyone has his role. Indians, fur traders, and missionaries are all flawed and the author grades them accordingly. One of the exceptions to this statement is his assessment of Rowand as a husband. In 1840 the fur trader, then 51 years old, was contemplating retiring and seeking a new non-Indian wife. Mr. MacGregor excuses him by saying this was an accepted practice. To “turn off” a wife of thirty years was not
standard behaviour in the fur trade or elsewhere. This was the exception, not the rule. The marital misadventures of George Simpson, John G. McTavish and William Connolly, which have been so frequently quoted, were definitely off the matrix.

Like so many fur traders Rowand found the missionaries, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, a particularly difficult cross to bear. "The fort is not a place to keep ministers, who are never pleased except when the Fort is full of Indians, doing nothing ... except learning to sing salms [sic]" he wrote to Governor George Simpson. Nor did Rowand find it amusing that the Reverend Robert Rundle refused to travel without his cat. To his credit, Rowand, a conscientious Catholic, provided rooms in the fort for the missionaries and went out of his way to help them. He was clever enough to know that to keep harmony one did not have to love missionaries. They had simply to be endured.

In keeping with his dictum the author touches all the peaks, and combined they make a rollicking good story. Inter-tribal wars, attacks by grizzly bears, horse stealing, scalping, the pemmican war, in which Rowand took part, are all recorded. While there is a fine line between recklessness and fearlessness, there is ample evidence to indicate that Rowand was courageous. No fiction writer could have invented him. He commanded the respect of the powerful and boastful Blackfoot Confederacy because he understood their customs and was scrupulously fair with them. He was a good manager of men; he never asked a subordinate to do anything that he himself could not do or had not done. Frequently, he suffered greater personal hardships than the servants. When he commanded the Bow River Expedition in 1822–23 his house was the last to be built. Not until February 15, 1823, when winter was almost over, did Rowand move from a tent to a house. Unfortunately, during the last decade of Rowand’s life he became less tolerant of the weaknesses of others.

Mr. MacGregor is a teller of stories, not an historian. There is little analysis of people and events in the book; there is, however, much to be learned about life in Western Canada. It is interesting to note that when the 250 Iroquois arrived in what is now Alberta in 1798 they "looked down upon all white men and all other Indians"; that a boat filled with water was kept in the main yard at Fort Edmonton to help fight fires; and that cattle were shipped to Lesser Slave Lake as early as 1833. There has been a considerable amount of original research done for this book and one wishes that Mr. MacGregor had been more generous in his footnoting. This reviewer was interested in knowing the citations for numerous statements including the one (p. 9) that Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière came west in the service of the Hudson’s Bay Company.
Historical inaccuracies are infrequent. Most fur-trade historians know that George Simpson was not appointed Governor of Rupert’s Land in 1821; nor was Margaret Taylor his wife of ten years’ standing in 1830.

In fairness to the author it must be said that this book shows haste in its preparation for publication and lacks the careful attention of a good editor. There is repetition and awkward sentence structure. If some of the details had been relegated to footnotes, the writing would have flowed more easily. The index is poorly compiled; a random check of entries shows that many of them are incomplete. A biographical note on the author and a list of his previous books would have been appreciated.

Nevertheless, there is much to cheer about. It is particularly gratifying that Mr. and Mrs. MacGregor have been able to devote many of their retirement years to researching and writing books. Theirs is a commendable achievement.

Shirlee Anne Smith
Hudson’s Bay Company Archivist
Provincial Archives of Manitoba


Publication of Alan Artibise’s bibliography is a clear indication of the emergence of Western Canadian studies as a recognized field of scholarly research. The work, a select bibliography at that, is nearly 300 pages in length and contains more than 3,600 individual entries.

Not long ago, a similar work would have been a slender volume indeed. I would estimate that at least half the entries in this bibliography have been published since the mid-1960s.

The sudden burgeoning of publications relating to Western Canada makes a select list not only helpful, but necessary. A vast territory needs its own map to guide anyone who sets forth to explore it, whether a newcomer or an experienced traveller.

The principal qualification of this bibliography to serve as such a map is well expressed by Dr. Artibise in the preface. It is select and, as such, not intended to replace earlier more comprehensive bibliographies. Nonetheless, it is unique in that it is the first bibliography to list sources relating to all four western provinces. Further, while its emphasis is historical, the bibliography is reflective of the multi-disciplinary facets of Western Canadian studies. With the exception
of the fine arts and literature, each discipline’s contribution to the field of study is extensively represented.

Dr. Artibise defines his objective in preparing this list as “to provide its users with ample references to undertake a study of almost any topic falling under the Western Canadian studies umbrella.” The items listed are those which, in his judgement, are essential to the study of the region.

Whether or not Dr. Artibise has fulfilled these promises is beyond the scope of my judgement or perhaps that of any one individual. The field of Western Canadian studies is now so vast that few can be expected to be familiar with the total range of its literature. There are not many, for example, who will be equally at home with material relating both to the Prairies and to British Columbia.

I was unable to find any serious omission in my perusal of those sections of the book of most interest to me. I would offer one small criticism, however. It would be helpful if the most essential, the seminal studies, were somehow distinguished; 3600 pieces is a lot of essential reading for anyone.

Among the bibliography’s other virtues is that it makes reference not only to books, but to periodical articles and to unpublished theses and research papers as well. These additions are most welcome as some of the best material relating to the West is available only from these sources.

Dr. Artibise also has chosen wisely to list individual articles contained in the collections of such institutions as the University of Calgary’s Western Canadian Studies Conference and the University of Regina’s Canadian Plains Research Center. Some of these pieces are among the best (sometimes the only) items available on their subject and might easily be lost to the student if not listed individually.

On the whole, the bibliography is thoughtfully organized and readily accessible to the user. It is divided into seven major sections: a general section, one each on the Riel Rebellions and the North West Territories to 1905, together with a section on each of the four western provinces. Each major section is further subdivided into broad and obvious categories: agriculture, politics, economics, etc.

Use of the bibliography is further facilitated by both an author and a selected subject index. One of its most helpful features, especially for the novice, is a listing, together with a brief description, of journals, published series and institutions pertinent to the study of Western Canada.

In short, the book is to be heartily recommended to any one with more than a passing interest in the Canadian West. It would be particularly valuable to any library — whether college or school, public
or private—that wishes to establish a basic collection of Western Canadiana.

For those directly involved in research—now a small but prolific army—the book may serve a function beyond its immediate utilitarian value as a bibliography. Dr. Artibise offers the hope that his work may help to locate those aspects of Western Canadian studies which so far have been ignored or only cursorily dealt with by researchers. Long-lamented deficiencies in the literature relating to the West are certainly evident in this listing. These include local histories of universal interest, competent biographies, empathetic portraits of Indian life and, perhaps most noticeable of all, a good scholarly history of the region as a whole.

It is to be hoped that reflection on the nature of sources listed in this book may serve also to heighten awareness of the presuppositions and prejudices which underlie the work already completed. Any body of scholarship is necessarily coloured by numerous unconscious assumptions and commonplaces shared both by the scholar and the society in which he lives. This is apt to be especially true of a relatively new area of study which has not had time to develop its own keen sense of discernment and self-criticism. Corrective efforts can begin only after a rigorous examination of the body of scholarship as a whole has brought these tendencies to the attention of the conscious mind.

In turning through the pages of Dr. Artibise's bibliography, I was reminded of an impression I have long held of a severe and limiting bias in Western Canadian studies. It seems to me that this scholarship, with few exceptions, has suffered from an overweening preoccupation with the external and the quantitative, with the morphological aspects of social reality. As a result, the more elusive dimensions of that same reality, which are internal, qualitative and largely invisible, have been seriously neglected. Thus we have succeeded in telling the story of the institutions and organizations of the West from the CPR to the CCF. We have given accounts of many of the behavioural phenomena, whether political, economic or cultural, which have shaped our society. But rarely have we penetrated below the visible surface of happenings and events to describe the less tangible realities of heart, mind and soul or of a collective consciousness. The time has come when scholars must explore these hidden dimensions of our society.

Ted Wood,
Lecturer in History,
Notre Dame College, Wilcox and University of Regina,
Canadian Plains Studies Program.

The fact that Myrna Kostash has written a “best seller” (a unique achievement for what is essentially an ethnic history) grants All of Baba's Children a certain immunity from academic criticism. This is not to suggest, however, that some criticism is not in order.

First, the reader has difficulty in finding a precise theme for the book because the author seems to be attempting to write a unique ethnic history, an exposé of myths by and about a particular ethnic group, as well as an exposé of the true nature of multiculturalism in general, and a statement of the attitudes of the third generation toward ethnicity. In varying degrees the author has succeeded in all of these aims. It is confusing that initially Kostash claims to be writing a book “not about the immigrants; it is about their children — my parents’ generation — the ones who had to find their identity, their purpose, their community and their pride somewhere between Galicia and downtown Canada” (p. 8). In fact the book is largely concerned with the conflict between Ukrainian identity and a broader Canadian (originally Anglo-Canadian) way of life, not only for the second generation, but also in terms of immigrant “adjustment” and third generation re-interpretation of ethnicity. Throughout the book, but particularly in the closing chapters, the author is preoccupied with her own relationship with her Ukrainian or Ukrainian-Canadian identity, past and present; the search for this identity is the actual “raison d'être” of the book.

Kostash points out in the introduction that “the bias of this book ... begins and ends with (her) desire to demystify the prevalent mythologies, indulged in by both Ukrainian-Canadians and non-Ukrainian-Canadians, about ethnic history in the prairies.” In point of fact the book is full of biases. Foremost is the author’s intentional bias toward neglected aspects of ethnic historiography. Much attention is devoted to the political-economic history of the Ukrainian left (in chapters 4: World War I, 11: Depression, 12: Politics, 13: World War II, 14: Nationalism). Not infrequently the author comments bluntly on the degraded position of Ukrainian women in Canada: for example, “In the Ukrainian-Canadian home, ... liberalism was rare. Traditionally, the wife had no more status than the cow...” (p. 355).

Kostash writes as a somewhat left (“a progressive outside the bourgeois establishment,” as she puts it), somewhat feminist, undecidedly or unconvincingly non-partisan third generation ethnic. All of Baba’s Children has not been written by an uncommitted and disinterested, completely urbanized and cosmopolitan representative of a pan-Canadian identity. If the author is intentionally provocative, she also tends toward being melodramatic.
If this book is a “journalistic inquiry,” as Kostash has suggested, it is certainly not a well-rounded nor entirely accurate example of historical scholarship. The question must be raised, however, whether her controversial conclusions or exclamations could be anything but biased unless they are based on careful scholarship and research. Kostash’s version of Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Canadian history is admittedly biased, which is in keeping with her intention to write about neglected aspects of ethnic history. But it is also rather distorted, highly selective, and over-simplified.

Not infrequently the author reveals a tendency to generalize from a single community (Two Hills, Alberta) within a particular rural block settlement (east of Edmonton), to the entire Ukrainian-Canadian population. This settlement had been founded by poor peasants from one region then situated within the Austrian Empire (whereas most of the Ukraine was within the Russian Empire). The book focuses on the first migration of Ukrainians to Canada (Chapters 1: Emigration and 2: Arrival and Settlement), a migration which established vast Ukrainian block settlements across the prairies. But little mention is made of two subsequent migrations (inter-war and post-war), which differed significantly from the first in that these later migrants tended to be more diversified, coming from a wider variety of European geographical, social, educational, and perhaps political backgrounds; while the former migrants were largely illiterate rural peasants, the later arrivals were better-educated urbanites and included many professionals.

Moreover, the author’s concentration on the community of Two Hills, and on the surrounding Ukrainian settlement, is misleading in another respect. How much of the life she is describing is uniquely Ukrainian? Surely much of what Kostash seems to be describing as a Ukrainian-Canadian way of life is characteristic of poor areas of rural Canada, such as problems encountered by farming communities during the Depression years (Chapters 10: Work and 11: Depression).

In all fairness, though, Kostash deserves ample credit for providing most interesting descriptions of early Ukrainian-Canadian life and culture in this rural prairie settlement (Chapters 5: The Homestead, 6: The School, 7: Church, 8: Community, and 9: Culture, with a subsection on Language).

Kostash is rather appropriately cynical about multicultural policies as just so much government tokenism. She believes that Canadian ethnic minorities should be “making their demands from a consciousness of their socio-economic powerlessness.” The author points out that multiculturalism seems to be a fanciful and irrelevant doctrine “which avoids confronting the nature and extent of assimilation” (p. 385). Kostash has clearly, even eloquently, explained the changing nature of Ukrainian-Canadian identity, inter-generational
differences in attitudes toward ethnicity and in life-styles (Chapter 15: Assimilation and 16: Mythologies), and the failure of early attempts at Anglo-conformity (Chapters 3: Racism and 6: School). But the author has not explained exactly who is and who is not Ukrainian-Canadian. To what extent do the almost half of Canadians of Ukrainian descent who are neither Ukrainian Catholic nor Orthodox in religion still retain their Ukrainian identity? What has been the effect of increasing—and already commonplace—intermarriage on Ukrainian identity? How accurate are census definitions of Ukrainian origin, based as they are only on paternal lineage? Nor does the reader find the author proposing in any detail alternative courses of action which could make for a more genuine multiculturalism, for example, educational reforms such as the teachings of ethnic-oriented history, instruction in ethnic languages, etc.

Kostash makes some very challenging, while not always fair, references to a variety of previous writers on Ukrainian-Canadians, such as J. S. Woodsworth and Charles Young—both Anglo-Canadians—and Paul Yuzyk, the Ukrainian champion of multiculturalism. She seems particularly annoyed by their tendency to romanticize Ukrainian-Canadian character, just as she criticizes Ukrainian-Canadian old-guard nationalists for their unrealistic romanticism. As she has commented (p. 384), “...such idealistic images may bear little relation to Ukrainian social reality and even less to the here-and-now of Ukrainian-Canadian life. The question is, can the notion and practice of multiculturalism be anything but misconceived and misdirected when derived from such historical mystifications?” Nonetheless, Kostash has leaned in the same direction herself, tending to overemphasize the significance of Ukrainians within Canadian society. Perhaps a more realistic historical analysis would suggest that Ukrainian immigrants were convenient for the purpose of rapid settlement in the prairies and later for a supply of cheap urban labour; at any rate they were neither indispensable nor irreplaceable.

Kostash portrays her book as a personal search for her roots. But after tracing a path (selectively and none too systematically) through certain aspects of Ukrainian-Canadian history, the author apparently remains rather unimpressed by Ukrainian-Canadian “pop” culture and rural backwardness: “A tourist I came, a tourist I leave. Like thousands and thousands of Ukrainian-Canadians of my generation and beyond, I only travel these ethnic sideroads when I need to find a breathing space awhile, away from the fumes of the cosmopolitan metropolis and all its works. But, metropolis is what I return to when it’s time to go home” (p. 399).

A few final comments on the organization of the book, which is based largely on a combination of interviews and municipal records from Two Hills with references to selected literature on Ukrainian-
Canadians. It includes numerous (perhaps too many) quotes from interviews, which begin each chapter. An index is notably lacking, making it difficult to use the book for future reference purposes. There is a problem of faulty listing of some references (dates, place of publication). Chapter headings are brief (some too brief) and to the point, but they don’t necessarily inform the reader what each chapter actually contains (for example, a lengthy and useful description of Ukrainian-Canadian voluntary associations is submerged in Chapter 14: Nationalism).

In conclusion, All of Baba's Children has many weaknesses. But it also has its strengths, not the least of which are its popularization and rather unique interpretation of ethnic history, its thought-provoking commentary on changing attitudes toward ethnic identity, and its systematic de-mystification of ethnic history and multi-culturalism.

A. B. Anderson
Department of Sociology
University of Saskatchewan


In the mid-1890s two spectacular murders of N.W.M.P. sergeants by Indians upset the generally peaceful, if not entirely tension-free, relationship between the police and the native population. The motives for the killing of Sergeant C. C. Colebrook by Almighty Voice and Sergeant W. B. Wilde by the Blood known as Charcoal seemed inexplicable to the Mounted Police at the time and have continued to elude historians ever since. Of the two incidents the Almighty Voice affair has received far more attention, probably because it has seemed a more dramatic symbol of the extinction of native culture by the steamroller of European immigration. Hugh Dempsey, in his best work to date, explores the lesser-known tragedy of Charcoal and does a fine job of re-creating the world as Charcoal saw it. In describing Charcoal’s journey to the scaffold he provides a more accurate metaphor for the demise of native culture than Almighty Voice's defiant extinction by artillery.

Romantics and purveyors of the myth of the noble savage will doubtless continue to favour Almighty Voice. The manner of his death prevented a trial which might have provided the basis for research into his character and motivation. The evidence taken at Charcoal’s trial precludes his portrayal as a one-dimensional symbol of native resistance. Dempsey makes full use of this material and many other sources to draw a complex and very human portrait of his protagonist.
Charcoal emerges with his full share of human weaknesses. He and his brothers had gained a measure of notoriety among the Bloods early in life through their reckless exploits against the Cree in which they persisted even when a peace agreement was in effect between the two peoples. When the arrival of the Mounted Police brought an end to inter-tribal warfare, the family seems to have been noted among the Bloods mainly for its laziness.

Charcoal’s energies were channelled into religious activities. Among other things, he belonged to the Horn Society, the most powerful religious group among the Bloods. He owned a number of sacred objects, including a Bear Knife which was believed to endow its owner with the ferocity of the grizzly.

These prized possessions and Charcoal’s religious status in the tribe were threatened when he discovered that his first wife, Pretty Wolverine Woman, was having an affair with her cousin, Medicine Pipe Stem. Infidelity alone would not have been a serious matter but intercourse with a cousin was considered incest and was regarded by the Bloods with extreme distaste. Although warned by Charcoal to cease, the lovers persisted. Catching them in the act, Charcoal shot Medicine Pipe Stem neatly through the eye, killing him instantly. Charcoal knew the penalty for murder and considered himself a dead man from this point on. It only remained to arrange an appropriate warrior’s death. That meant killing an individual of high status—a chief perhaps, or a Mounted Police officer—so that the victim’s spirit could precede Charcoal’s and announce his coming, ensuring his standing in the shadow world of the dead. Once this was accomplished Charcoal could kill his unfaithful wife and die with dignity himself.

For more than a month Charcoal eluded a massive police manhunt while he pursued his quest. During this time he made unsuccessful attempts to kill Chief Red Crow of the Bloods, Indian Agent James Wilson, Corporal William Armer of the Mounted Police and Farm Instructor Edward McNeil, although he wounded the latter. Success came at last when he was nearly captured by a patrol after revealing his location by raping a young Piegan woman. The leader of the patrol, Sergeant Wilde, tried to arrest Charcoal who shot and killed him. This proved to be the high point of Charcoal’s success. The police had already rounded up Charcoal’s brothers and their families, twenty-six people in all, when they were discovered to have aided the fugitive. After the murder of Wilde the police pressured the family into active cooperation. If they agreed to help the police, all would be released and no charges would be laid for aiding and abetting. Furthermore, Charcoal’s nephew Crane Chief, awaiting trial on a charge of cattle killing, would also be set free. The family agreed to this shabby bargain and overpowered Charcoal a few days later when he again sought assistance.
In contrast to the treatment of the Indian actors in the drama, Dempsey examines the character and motivation of only one of Charcoal's opponents, the officer in charge of the manhunt, Superintendent Sam Steele. The portrayal is less than successful. Dempsey's Steele emerges as a cardboard imperialist interested only in personal gain and the advancement of his career. This is fair enough as far as Steele personally is concerned but since he is the only European given more than a passing mention in the book he comes to embody White society. This is misleading because Steele was no more typical of the N.W.M.P. than Charcoal was of the Bloods. Steele performed well any task that required abundant quantities of energy, physical courage and, to a degree, organizational ability, but he had the least subtle mind of any Mounted Police officer of his generation. The police recognized his shortcomings and never promoted him beyond the rank of superintendent. The British Army, less discerning, made him a general. Dempsey talks of "Steele's Law" in the book but I can see no evidence of violation of the law or departure from normal procedure. Steele did not have enough imagination for that; he went by the book and the book did not cover situations like this one.

This is a minor criticism. The essential story is Charcoal's, not Steele's, and it is told very well indeed. Charcoal's end came not in a direct confrontation with the forces of White society. Instead, his failure to adapt to that society made him a menace to his own people who accordingly played a major role in his destruction. All the participants in the event were diminished by it. Those who prefer spotless heroes, red or white, will be disappointed by this book. Those who prefer an adult version of western Canadian history will find it fascinating, if depressing.

R. C. Macleod
Department of History
University of Alberta