

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION IN THE  
POLITICS OF NEWFOUNDLAND, 1850-1861

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JOHN P. GREENE

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION IN  
THE POLICE IN AMERICA, 1850-1900



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THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION IN  
THE POLITICS OF NEWFOUNDLAND, 1850-1861



JOHN P. GREENE

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts, Memorial University of Newfoundland,  
St. John's, Newfoundland, March 24, 1970.

## ABSTRACT

The Liberal campaign for self-government in Newfoundland made great headway in the early 1850's only after the Roman Catholic Church undertook to campaign in its behalf. While that alliance, in a Colony almost evenly divided between Catholics and Protestants, ensured a strong base of support for the Liberals at the same time official Catholic opposition to the government tended to confine the reform movement to a sectarian cause. Past experience had demonstrated that the partnership with the conservative "Church of Rome" had proven damaging to Liberalism while the Catholic Bishop had proven unable to restrain his lust for domination thereby tending to alienate Protestants from the Liberal Party. When the latter, therefore, earnestly began the fight for Responsible Government after 1850 The Conservatives resisted the movement as a Catholic plot to gain ascendancy and attempted to organize Protestants in an effort to depict the reform campaign as a purely religious struggle. Limited success, however, was accomplished in this regard as religious dissensions split the Protestant community from within while the presence of more tolerant and compromising leadership, both within the Catholic Church and the Liberal Party, made it possible for the latter to take advantage of Protestant disunity and acquire non-Roman Catholic support. Thus the Liberals were able to broaden their denominational appeal and win Responsible Government in 1855.



However, the assumption of power by the Liberals became, in a sense, the means to their downfall as their dependence on Roman Catholics was clearly underlined by the denominational character of their political appointments. While this tended to hasten 'Protestant Union' at the same time the conflicts which had theretofore divided the Protestant community became resolved. In addition, rivalries among Protestant denominations became replaced by dissensions within Catholic Liberal ranks as the more liberal, independent Catholics opposed the ascendancy of the Bishop supported, conservative, Irish Catholics. When the Roman Catholic Bishop, therefore, attempted to mold a party more completely subject to his views independent Catholics revolted and rejected his interference. While the Liberal Party officially supported Bishop Mullock in an attempt to unite Catholics by a religious campaign the Conservatives took advantage of the resulting disunion to draw off Protestant support and bring the downfall of the Liberals in 1861.

## PREFACE

While discussions on religious influences in Newfoundland politics have never failed to capture the interest of Newfoundlanders, that topic has never been subject to intensive research. While, on the one hand, it has always been generally suspected that religious rivalries constituted a vital political force, either publicly or behind the scenes, the extent or limitations of that power have never been fully defined. It is with the intention of making some contribution toward the satisfaction of that need that the author has produced a thesis on a very crucial period in Newfoundland's political history - the years immediately preceding, and immediately following, the introduction of self-government. Although the same period has been surveyed in Dr. Gunn's The Political History of Newfoundland, 1832-1864<sup>1</sup> and Mrs. Wells' "The Struggle for Responsible Government in Newfoundland, 1846-1855"<sup>2</sup>, the theme of religious influence has remained very subsidiary throughout each work.

For purposes of this thesis the year 1850 has been chosen as a point at which to commence because, in that year, both the Roman Catholic Church and the Liberal Party acquired new leaders, both of whom were to play predominant political roles in the years succeeding. In addition, the year 1850 witnessed the beginning, politically, of

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<sup>1</sup>Gertrude E. Gunn, The Political History of Newfoundland, 1832-1864 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966).

<sup>2</sup>Elizabeth A. Wells, "The Struggle for Responsible Government in Newfoundland, 1846-1855" (Unpublished Master's Dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1967).

Anglican attempts to set up their own school system, a circumstance that tended to alienate Wesleyans from the Conservative Party and create opportunities for the Roman Catholic based Liberals to broaden their denominational appeal. The year 1861 has been chosen as a suitable departure point because the rebellion among Catholic Liberals and sectarian riots of that date contributed to the culmination of 'Protestant Union', the downfall of the Liberals and the assumption of office by the Conservative Party.

In the production of this thesis the author is indebted, for valuable assistance, to the following: firstly, to Dr. Keith Matthews, for his supervision and criticisms; also to the staff of Memorial University Library, particularly Miss Agnes O'Dea and the staff of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies; to the staff of the Provincial Archives, particularly the late Mr. A.M. Fraser and the recently appointed Archivist, Mr. Burnham Gill; to Monsignor D.L. O'Daefe for admission to the Roman Catholic Archives; to the Newfoundland Government and the Institute of Social and Economic Research for financial assistance; and lastly, but not least, to my wife, Shiela, without whose patience and encouragement this thesis would not have been possible.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE .....	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	iv
 CHAPTER	
I        THE BACKGROUND, 1832-1852 .....	1
II       LITTLE, MULLOCK AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE LIBERAL PARTY, 1850-1852 .....	27
III      THE ELECTION OF 1852 AND THE REPRESENTATION STRUGGLE, 1852-1854 .....	56
IV       THE ELECTION OF 1855 .....	85
V        RELIGION IN POLITICS, 1855-1860 .....	102
VI       RUPTURES IN THE LIBERAL-CATHOLIC ALLIANCE .....	121
CONCLUSION .....	147
APPENDIX .....	151
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	159

# LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
I	THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF NEWFOUNDLAND IN 1852 SHOWING OCCUPATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION .....	2
II	THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL PATRONAGE IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF NEWFOUNDLAND IN 1852 ACCORDING TO DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION .....	3
III	THE DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION OF THE POPULATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND, SHOWING ELECTORAL DISTRIBUTIONS, ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1845 .....	8
IV	BREAKDOWN OF DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATIONS IN THE LARGELY PROTESTANT DISTRICTS ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1857 .....	16
V	DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS, BY DISTRICTS, ACCORDING TO THE REPRESENTATION BILL PRODUCED BY PHILIP LITTLE IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, ST. JOHN'S, FEBRUARY 20, 1852 .....	48
VI	THE ELECTORAL DIVISION OF CONCEPTION BAY, ACCORD- ING TO W.B. ROW, LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MARCH 19, 1852 .....	53
VII	PROBABLE RETURNS UNDER THE BILL PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY AND SENT TO THE COUNCIL FOR THEIR CONCURRENCE ON MARCH 28, 1853, ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1845 .....	67
VIII	LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENTS TO THE REPRESENT- ATION BILL PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, MARCH 28, 1853 .....	69

Table		Page
IX	REPRESENTATION BILL PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY APRIL 11, 1854 .....	75
X	LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENTS TO THE REPRESENTATION BILL PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY, APRIL 1854 .....	78
XI	THE REPRESENTATION BILL PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND FINALLY ACCEPTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 9, 1854 .....	84
XII	THE COMPOSITION OF THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCILS, 1855-1860, SHOWING DENOMINATIONAL AND RESIDENTIAL AFFILIATIONS .....	103
XIII	PRINCIPAL EXPENDITURES OF THE GOVERNMENT, 1855- 1860 .....	122
XIV	DISTRIBUTION OF POOR RELIEF BY DISTRICT FOR SELECTED YEARS .....	126
XV	DISTRIBUTION OF ROAD MONIES FOR SELECTED YEARS ..	127



## CHAPTER I

### THE BACKGROUND, 1832-1852

Analysis of the government and civil service of Newfoundland for the post-1832 period demonstrates that, by 1850 at least, Anglicans and St. John's merchants received priority in political appointments.<sup>1</sup> By the latter date Representatives of those bodies dominated positions in the Legislative Council<sup>2</sup> while members of the first named organization maintained positions out of all proportion to their numbers in the Colony. Despite the fact that Roman Catholics, for instance, numbered almost one-half of the entire population, only one of that creed, the recently appointed Lawrence O'Brien, sat in a Legislative Council of ten. Governor LeMarchant, however, had recognized that Catholics deserved some representation in the Council and O'Brien's appointment was made so that "... all complaint or charge of partiality on account of religious differences, may, on the part of the government, be avoided...."<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, his expectation that the appointment of one Catholic, to a Council of ten, could assuage any Catholic discontent must be considered naive.

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<sup>1</sup>See Table I, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>The Legislative Council was the appointed, Upper House of the two-House Legislature. While it possessed Legislative functions, it also served as an Executive Council, acting with the Governor.

<sup>3</sup>C.O. 194/133, f. 130, LeMarchant to Grey, May 3, 1850.

TABLE I

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF NEWFOUNDLAND IN 1852 SHOWING  
OCCUPATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION<sup>a</sup>

MEMBERS	RELIGION	OCCUPATION
W. Thomas	Anglican	Merchant
W.B. Row	Anglican	Merchant
C.F. Bennett	Anglican	Merchant
L. O'Brien	Roman Catholic	Merchant
J.J. Grieve	Presbyterian	Merchant
T.B. Job	Congregationalist	Merchant
Col. Law	Anglican	Commandant
E.M. Archibald	Anglican	Attorney General
J. Crowley	Anglican	Colonial Secretary
J. Noad	Congregationalist	Surveyor General

<sup>a</sup>Compiled from: Journal of the Legislative Council, 1852, p. 9; also Gunn, Appendix C, pp. 203-204; also Wells, Appendix C, pp. 235-236.

Catholic under-representation on the appointed Council was paralleled by a similar, though less extreme, under-representation in the Civil Service where they occupied less than thirty per cent of the total positions.<sup>4</sup> This discrepancy was rendered even more glaring by the fact that, in general, positions filled by Catholics were less well paid than those filled by Anglicans. However, the Catholics were not alone in obtaining civil employment to a smaller extent than their numbers seemed to justify for the Wesleyan Methodists were even more under-represented.<sup>5</sup> In addition, it must also be remembered that not one

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<sup>4</sup>Table II.

<sup>5</sup>ibid.

Wesleyan sat in the Upper House<sup>6</sup> giving that body greater cause to complain about patronage than the Roman Catholics. Those two denominations, therefore, shared common grievances against an Anglican government, a situation which, perhaps, could be exploited for political purposes.

TABLE II

THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL PATRONAGE IN  
THE CIVIL SERVICE OF NEWFOUNDLAND IN  
1852 ACCORDING TO DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION<sup>a</sup>

DENOMINATION	POPULATION	NUMBER OF PUBLIC OFFICERS	AMOUNT OF ANNUAL SALARIES
Anglican	34,281	93	18,020
Roman Catholic	46,785	52	4,588
Wesleyan Methodist	14,239	15	336
Presbyterian	576	6	780
Congregationalist	394	8	1,500
Totals	96,275	174	25,224

<sup>a</sup>The Pilot, March 6, 1852.

While the mercantile character of the government was almost as marked as its denominational complexion that reflected the economic power, rather than the numerical strength, of the merchant community. Comprising a tiny minority of the population, the wealthy merchant class of St. John's dominated the single industry, fishing economy, principally

<sup>6</sup>Above, Table I, p. 2.



In the eastern districts of the Island.<sup>7</sup> With the population divided, basically, between two classes the merchants constituted an elite with almost the whole population made up of fishermen, servants or laborers. While dealers,<sup>8</sup> planters,<sup>9</sup> shopkeepers, doctors and lawyers did exist even in St. John's they did not constitute a numerically large proportion of the population. However, while the Anglicans and merchants of 1850 had preserved, almost intact, their privileged positions for the nearly twenty years of Representative Government, it was no surprise that, since 1832, political conflicts had revolved around those two themes. Two political parties, one liberal, the other conservative, almost evenly divided the fifteen-member House of Assembly<sup>10</sup> in 1850 with the first named opposing the government while the conservative party maintained the 'status quo'. Assuming political shape upon receipt of the grant of Representative Government in 1832 the conservative party, led by several wealthy St. John's merchants, had

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<sup>7</sup>Leslie Harris, "The First Nine Years of Representative Government in Newfoundland" (unpublished Master's dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1959), pp. 31, 40; Gertrude Gunn, The Political History of Newfoundland, 1832-1864 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), pp. 5-6; for map of Newfoundland see Appendix I.

<sup>8</sup>Dealers were small businessmen whom the larger merchants supplied with provisions where they, themselves, were not established. Often, they were agents of St. John's firms.

<sup>9</sup>Generally speaking Planters were the more well-to-do fishermen, who owned one or more boats and hired servants.

<sup>10</sup>The House of Assembly, granted to the Colony in 1832, was the elected, Lower-House of the bicameral Legislature. For the nine electoral districts, into which the Colony was divided, see map, Appendix I and for electoral distribution, 1850, see Appendix IIA.

championed the cause of those who had 'a stake in the country'.<sup>11</sup> With that 'stake' in almost every district of the Colony the merchant-dominated conservative party succeeded in electing candidates in every riding to take control of the first House of Assembly.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the liberals, whose leadership had arisen from the St. John's middle class,<sup>13</sup> purported to champion the cause of the fishermen while attacking the mercantile elite for monopolizing the government in their own interest.<sup>14</sup> Suffering from lack of organization in 1832,<sup>15</sup> particularly in the outport ridings, the liberals had acquired only four seats, a circumstance which they subsequently sought to have remedied by taking advantage of the almost universal suffrage<sup>16</sup> to incite the 'lower orders' against the monopoly of wealth. Under the leadership of John Kent, general merchandise importer, and the liberal reformer, Dr. Carson, they commenced, in 1833, a vigorous and sustained anti-mercantile agitation which, by 1837, had netted them a considerable majority in the Assembly.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, during the interim, the

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<sup>11</sup>The Public Ledger, September 14, 18, 25, November 9, 1832.

<sup>12</sup>See Appendix III.

<sup>13</sup>the term 'middle class' is meant the group of doctors, lawyers, merchants, shopkeepers and, generally speaking, merchants who did not engage in the fishing industry.

<sup>14</sup>The Newfoundlander, September 13, 20, 1832.

<sup>15</sup>Gunn, p. 32.

<sup>16</sup>All males over twenty-one years of age who had occupied a dwelling, either as owner or tenant for one year previous to election, were qualified to vote; see Harris, p. 18.

<sup>17</sup>Gunn, pp. 31-33; for electoral returns of 1837 see Appendix IIC.

pro-mercantile — anti-mercantile conflicts had become practically submerged in a war of creeds<sup>18</sup> while the hustings experienced election riots and disorders without which, perhaps, the liberal party would not have been successful in activating the masses. The prospects of religious interference had been foreseen as early as 1832 when the Roman Catholic Bishop, M.A. Fleming, placed his public support behind the liberals, John Kent and Doctor Carson.<sup>19</sup> With members of the Anglican Church dominating the government and Civil Service the Roman Catholic Church, naturally, shared a common cause with the liberals in opposing the establishment. On the other hand, the liberal party proved only too happy to receive the support of the Catholic Church, particularly in view of the fact that Catholics formed large majorities in three ridings and a substantial minority in the four-member district of Conception Bay.<sup>20</sup> However, the spectacle of the Roman Catholic Church assaulting an Anglican government for its religious exclusiveness tended to translate political rivalries into purely religious conflicts, a situation which had definitely developed by 1837.<sup>21</sup> Those circumstances had also been partly conditioned by the fact that the commercial community

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<sup>18</sup>Harris, pp. 35-36; Gunn, pp. 15-16; also Rev. Charles Pedley, The History of Newfoundland From The Earliest Times To The Year 1860 (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1863), p. 391.

<sup>19</sup>The Newfoundlander, September 20, 1832; Fleming to the Editor, September 13, 1832.

<sup>20</sup>See Table III, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup>Harris, pp. 114-118; Gunn, pp. 33-34.



was almost exclusively Protestant<sup>22</sup> while an anti-mercantile campaign on the part of the Catholic Church, therefore, could hardly be restricted to a purely political basis. Nevertheless, the politico-religious conflicts had resulted mainly from the character and purpose of Bishop Fleming who had sought to develop liberal opposition to the government into one of religious duty and complusion.<sup>23</sup> As a general rule Fleming, and his priests, had used the Sunday pulpit to denounce Protestants and proscribe the conservative, Protestant Journal, the Public Ledger. Catholics who read that paper were declared outcasts, while their names were posted at the entrance to the Church with advice to 'good' Catholics not to associate with them. Rev. Fr. Troy, who had become Fleming's campaign manager, branded their Catholic opponents as 'mad dogs' who were cursed to hell for their heresy.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, persecution of Catholics, by their Church, was not limited to words, for the rites of the Church were denied to those who supported conservative candidates. The Catholic, Patrick Kough, in 1837, complained, in a statement that was to be forwarded to the Pope, that he was still being

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<sup>22</sup>The Commercial Society, a St. John's organization of principal merchants, contained approximately sixty active members, for example, from 1834-1841, only four of whom were Catholics; see the St. John's Chamber of Commerce, vol. 1 (Minute Book, 1834-1841), especially April 4, 9, June 22, August 5, 1835, June 2, August 10, 1836, December 15, 1837, August 1, November 27, 1838, June 21, 25, August 13, 1839, March 2, August 5, 1840, August 4, 1841.

<sup>23</sup>C.O. 194/97, ff. 415-416, Prescott to Glenelg, August 10, 1837, enclosures; also C.O. 194/99, ff. 3-20, Prescott to Glenelg, October 14, 1837, also C.O. 194/100, ff. 21-30, Prescott to Glenelg, January 3, 1838, enclosures.

<sup>24</sup>C.O. 194/97, ff. 415-416, Prescott to Glenelg, August 10, 1837, testimonial of William McLean Little.

denied participation in the rites of his Church because he had contested the 1832 election in opposition to Bishop Fleming.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, the presence, on the hustings, of Fleming's clergy attempting to direct the liberal campaign into a Catholic cause had produced such passions that severe breaches of the peace had occurred in 1833, 1836, 1837 and 1841. By the latter year religious tensions had become so aggravated that, in Conception Bay, the Churches had been forced to come to an agreement dividing the four-member district equally among Protestants and Catholics.<sup>26</sup>

TABLE III

THE DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATIONS OF THE  
POPULATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND, SHOWING ELECTORAL  
DISTRIBUTIONS, ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1845<sup>a</sup>

DISTRICTS	ROMAN CATHOLICS	PROTESTANTS	NUMBER OF ELECTED MEMBERS
St. John's	18,896	6,210	3
Conception Bay	11,580	16,446	4
Twillingate-Fogo	1,128	5,616	1
Bonaville Bay	1,809	5,418	1
Trinity Bay	1,283	7,518	1
Ferryland	4,201	169	1
Burin	1,951	2,407	1
Fortune Bay	382	4,708	1
Placentia-St. Mary's	5,455	1,018	2
Totals	46,685	49,410	15

<sup>a</sup>C.O. 194/141, Despatch No. 89, Hamilton to Grey, March 23, 1854, enclosure Petition from Central Protestant Committee, St. John's.

<sup>25</sup>C.O. 194/99, Despatch No. 54, Prescott to Glenelg, October 14, 1837, enclosure No. 3, Kough to Crowdy, September 12, 1837.

<sup>26</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, St. John's, February 20, 1852, speeches of J.L. Prendergast and Colonial Treasurer.

Although the assistance of the Catholic Church had undoubtedly been of some value in electing liberal candidates, particularly in Catholic districts, yet the liberal party, perhaps, had suffered more than it had gained from that alliance. Accepting the support of the Catholic Church it had really come under the leadership of Bishop Fleming who tended to make of it a Church organ for his own purposes. Having arrived in Newfoundland coincidently with repeal by the British Parliament of the civil disabilities affecting Roman Catholics, Fleming had immediately set out on a campaign for civil rights for his flock.<sup>27</sup> With the advent of the first elections, two years later, the Bishop discovered in the liberal party, a convenient instrument with which to do battle with the establishment. His 'liberalism', however, became somewhat restricted because of its lack of a Newfoundland orientation and Fleming's tendency to regard everything Irish as superior. "My lot is cast in a wild and desolate country," he had complained, "among a population little removed from a savage state."<sup>28</sup> Newfoundland society had, for him, little character, so that he imported from Ireland both his teachers<sup>29</sup> and his clergy.<sup>30</sup> In regard to the latter, he distinctly discouraged and opposed the idea of a native clergy proclaiming that the Missioners best suited to

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<sup>27</sup> Very Rev. M.F. Howley, Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland (Boston: Doyle and Whittle, 1883), pp. 257-259.

<sup>28</sup> C.O. 194/99, Despatch No. 54, Prescott to Glenelg, October 14, 1837, Enclosure No. 1, Fleming to Crowdy, N.D., N.P.

<sup>29</sup> Howley, pp. 277-279, 371, 235.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 263-264.

Newfoundland were "... young men drafted from Irish colleges."

Rejecting the suggestion that a seminary be formed to train local priests he had declared that "... we ought not to think of creating an institution calculated to form divisions between natives and colonists."<sup>31</sup> His scheme, therefore, seems to have been to create in Newfoundland a little Ireland with Irish teachers, Irish preachers and Irish institutions with, of course, himself at its head.

Nevertheless, there was serious opposition to Fleming from "... his own household."<sup>32</sup> A large number of prominent Catholic citizens protested the subjection of politics to religion and petitioned the British Government and the Pope to have Fleming removed.<sup>33</sup> Reflecting their sentiments was an appeal from one of the priests, Rev. Fr. Browne, of Ferryland, who charged that all was peace and quiet in the Colony until the arrival of Fleming whose "... intolerance, bigotry and prejudice ..." caused all the discord and whose ambition is such "... that he will not be content with anything less than absolute power, civil and ecclesiastical ...."<sup>34</sup> Browne also named two other priests who, like himself, were not associated with Fleming in the ministry. In response to the appeals, the Pope, perhaps because the Bishop had divided clergy

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 390, Fleming to the Archbishop of Quebec, November 18, 1847.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 366.

<sup>33</sup> C.O. 194/97, ff. 415-416, Prescott to Glenelg, August 10, 1837, enclosure; also C.O. 194/99, ff. 3-20, Prescott to Glenelg, October 14, 1837; also C.O. 194/100, ff. 21-30, Prescott to Glenelg, January 3, 1838, enclosure.

<sup>34</sup> C.O. 194/100, ff. 21-30, Prescott to Glenelg, January 3, 1838, enclosure No. 2, Father T. Browne to Crowdy, N.D.

and loyalty, ordered Fleming to desist from interference in politics and to suspend any priest who did so.<sup>35</sup> After 1840, it appears, Fleming complied with the order.

Nevertheless, by that date, great damage to the liberal cause had already been accomplished for political party lines tended, too closely, to follow the lines of denominational separation.<sup>36</sup> Consequent to the agitation of the Roman Catholic clergy the Conservative party had been, by 1837, confined to districts where Protestants maintained substantial majorities while the Liberals, winning all Roman Catholic ridings, had by violence and intimidation obtained a strong foothold in Conception Bay. While Liberals had won the Protestant constituencies of Fogo, Trinity Bay and Burin that, in large measure, was due to the fact that Conservatives, in disgust at the agitation and hostility generated among the 'lower orders', had resolved to boycott the House of Assembly.<sup>37</sup> While one Conservative member refused to take his seat the leading merchants began to agitate for abolition of the Lower House and a return to the Governor and Council of former years.<sup>38</sup> Basing their arguments on the interference of the Roman Catholic Church

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<sup>35</sup>C.O. 194/102, f. 49, Foreign Office to Prescott, March 18, 1838, *encluse*. Abercrombie to Palmerston, February 28, 1838.

<sup>36</sup>See Appendix 11C.

<sup>37</sup>Gunn, pp. 34-35.

<sup>38</sup>C.O. 194/100, ff. 21-30, Prescott to Glenelg, January 3, 1838, *enclosure* No. 1, Petition of the Merchants and Traders and other Inhabitants of St. John's, Newfoundland to Her Most Excellent Majesty, December 1837; also C.O. 194/101, f. 29, Prescott to Glenelg, December 24, 1838, *enclosure* No. 1, Petition of the Chamber of Commerce, St. John's, to the Queen.

In Colonial elections they maintained that, because of the wide suffrage, Catholic priests had been able to manipulate the ignorant masses so that the Assembly had come under the control of a tyrannical few. Supported by the Governor, who blamed the election violence on clerical agitation,<sup>39</sup> they received a sympathetic hearing from the British Government.<sup>40</sup> In the meantime political conflicts had become intensified as a result of clashes generated between the liberal Assembly and conservative Council.<sup>41</sup> Originating in the desire of the Assembly to acquire control of financial appropriations the dispute between the two bodies had reached such proportions by 1840-1841 that an almost complete legislative impasse had resulted.<sup>42</sup> Together with complaints of electoral disturbances, and clerical interference with the franchise, this legislative deadlock had convinced the British Government to suspend Newfoundland's constitution.<sup>43</sup>

As a solution to Newfoundland's political problems the British Government offered a new and restricted franchise while the two Houses were united into one Amalgamated Legislature.<sup>44</sup> Having acquired

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<sup>39</sup>Garfield Fizzard, "The Amalgamated Assembly of Newfoundland, 1841-1847" (unpublished Master's Dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1963), p. 26.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 20-22, 27.

<sup>41</sup>Gunn, pp. 36-37, 41, 49-52; also Fizzard, pp. 19-21, 23-27.

<sup>42</sup>Fizzard, pp. 19-21.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 22-27.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 41-54.



part of what they had demanded, in a more limited suffrage, the Conservatives, in the succeeding two elections of 1842 and 1848, had been able to regain the Protestant districts which they had lost in 1837.<sup>45</sup> The opposition of the Conservatives to Catholic interference, however, plus the Liberal alliance with the Roman Catholic Bishop had served to confine electoral support along the lines of denominational demarcation. The twenty-five member Amalgamated Legislature, ten of whom were appointed, had been inaugurated on a trial basis in an attempt to moderate conflicts between the two Houses. Depending, there, on votes in a single chamber legislation was enacted with less delay and fewer crises.<sup>46</sup> Having the power of appointing ten members in a House of twenty-five, the Governor had only to acquire the support of three elected members in order to succeed in his legislative endeavours. In addition, his wise distribution of patronage among both Liberals and Conservatives, Catholics and Protestants<sup>47</sup> contributed, also, to the relative political stability. When the subject of renewal, or discontinuance, of the Amalgamated Legislature was mooted in 1847 Governor Harvey had no hesitation in recommending a return of the two-House legislature.<sup>48</sup> The latter, with, of course, no change in the elective franchise, was regained by the Colony in 1848, a circumstance which neither Liberals nor Conservatives opposed.<sup>49</sup> The Conservatives had disliked the

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<sup>45</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>46</sup> Flizzard, pp. 83-84, 106.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99, 102, 104; also Gunn, pp. 92-93.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

Amalgamated Legislature because patronage had been distributed to Liberals while the alternative of controlling a separate, nominated Upper House with powers of amendment and veto over Assembly legislation gave them a more secure position. Liberals, on the other hand, although in receipt of patronage had remained in a minority with the prospect of winning a majority almost beyond their reach. In addition, they were gradually coming around to the idea of Responsible Government, while the Liberals could hardly realize party government in a legislature where ten members out of twenty-five were appointed. With the passing of the Amalgamated Legislature in 1848 the Liberals were relieved, then, to meet an Assembly, in 1849, in which they had a majority.<sup>50</sup>

In spite of the fact that Liberals enjoyed a majority in the House of Assembly in 1849 they faced rather a perplexing problem. Would they commence the same old battles which had marked the 1830's? If they did follow that pattern distinct possibilities still existed that the constitution might be modified once again for the Liberal party still remained a Roman Catholic party. Having captured the six Roman Catholic seats in 1848 the Liberal party depended on the 1841 Church agreement for their two seats in Conception Bay. That was not only a precarious position from which to launch a reform movement but it was the too-close alliance with the Catholic Church which had proven disastrous for the party in the past. Already it had been the cause of one retrogressive step, the curtailment of the franchise,<sup>51</sup> while its subjection

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<sup>50</sup>See Appendix IIA.

<sup>51</sup>With the abrogation of the Amalgamated Legislature the electoral qualification remained as it had been since 1842 viz: the possession of freehold tenements to the value of 40s in the outports and £5 in the towns; see Flizzard, p. 48.

to Catholic direction had ensnared the party between the 'conservatism' of Bishop Fleming and the 'toryism' of the St. John's mercantile class. If the liberal party were to make success of the reform movement it would need to become much less a 'Roman Catholic' party and broaden its denominational appeal. Because of the denominational character of the government, however, opportunities had existed for the liberal party to curry favor with the Wesleyans.<sup>52</sup> Previous experience, nevertheless, had apparently proven that common grievances on the subject of political patronage had not been sufficient to ally the Wesleyans behind the liberal cause. On the other hand, the Wesleyan Methodists, in contrast to Roman Catholics, were well represented commercially<sup>53</sup> while the subjection of the reform cause to an Irish Roman Catholic movement undoubtedly served to unite, instead of to divide, Protestant denominations.

However, by 1850, at least, the advantages of Wesleyan support to the liberals were underlined also by the peculiar geographical distribution of the electorate.<sup>54</sup> While 'Roman Catholic' districts elected six members to the fifteen-member House, 'Anglican' ridings returned but four representatives leaving the balance of five to be decided by Conception Bay and Burin. Those latter two districts were

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<sup>52</sup>Above, pp. 1-3.

<sup>53</sup>There were many prominent Scottish, Wesleyan names in the ranks of the Commercial Society; see The St. John's Chamber of Commerce, Vol. I (Minute Book, 1834-1841).

<sup>54</sup>See Table IV.

unique in that Wesleyans held the balance of power in each and could, if they wished, play off one major denomination against the other and thus decide any election based on a religious pattern. However, while Wesleyans, like Anglicans, of course, lacked the traditional subservience to Church leadership as characterized Roman Catholics yet only enough Wesleyan support was needed to rescue the Liberals from the stigma of being a 'Roman Catholic' party and to give them additional electoral support in either, or both, of Conception Bay and Burin. It was a prospect which the Liberals could not fail to exploit and, because of the Wesleyan-Anglican educational dispute which began in 1850, it became a much more realistic possibility than ever.

TABLE IV

THE DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATIONS OF THE  
POPULATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND, SHOWING ELECTORAL  
DISTRIBUTIONS IN THE PROTESTANT DISTRICTS,  
ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1857<sup>a</sup>

DISTRICT	ROMAN CATHOLICS	ANGLICANS	DISSENTERS	PROTESTANTS
Conception Bay	13,345	10,613	9,438	20,051
Twillingate-Fogo	1,442	5,232	2,043	8,275
Bonavista Bay	2,030	5,714	1,106	6,820
Trinity Bay	1,253	6,016	3,467	9,483
Burin	2,354	1,356	1,819	3,175
Fortune Bay	647	2,787	59	2,846
Totals	21,071	32,718	17,932 <sup>b</sup>	50,650

<sup>a</sup>Compiled from Gunn, Appendix E, Table IV, p. 208.

<sup>b</sup>Of the total of Dissenters, approximately 99% were Wesleyan Methodists.

The educational system, which had been set up in 1843 on a seven year trial basis, was no longer acceptable to the Anglican Church by 1850. In the former year Roman Catholics had been given control of their own, separate schools while the Protestant denominations, who remained amalgamated, could have unfettered use of the Bible and Prayer Book in schools under their direction.<sup>55</sup> The Protestant alliance in the field of education, however, did not continue to prove as peaceful as some had believed it would, for the 1840's saw conflicts generated within the Anglican Church that were to impair relations between that body and the Wesleyan Methodists. Gathering momentum after 1850 Tractarianism<sup>56</sup> had become the most powerful force in the Church of England prompting many public complaints against Bishop Field from members of his own Church. In 1853 Field faced a revolt from his congregation in St. John's because of the appointment of a Tractarian clergyman to St. Thomas' Church<sup>57</sup> while residents of Hr. Buffett, Placentia Bay, published a pamphlet accusing Field of encouraging 'anti-Protestant' practices in the Anglican Church.<sup>58</sup> Any who knew

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<sup>55</sup>Jacob Parsons, "The Origin and Growth of Newfoundland Methodism, 1765-1855" (unpublished Master's Dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1964), pp. 105-117.

<sup>56</sup>At Oxford, in the 1840's, several prominent Anglicans began the 'Oxford Movement' which endeavoured to prove that Roman Catholic doctrines could be held by their own co-religionists consistently with Anglicanism. Their followers, called Tractarians from the Tracts they published, urged adoption of Roman Catholic forms, ceremonies and practices in Anglican services.

<sup>57</sup>C.O. 194/140, f. 12, Hamilton to Newcastle, October 31, 1853, inclusive. Petition to the Pewholders of St. Thomas' Parish to the Governor, N.D.

<sup>58</sup>Thomas E. Collett, The Church of England in Newfoundland (St. John's, Joseph Woods, 1853), passim.

of Field's past history, however, would not have been surprised by those developments for, before coming to Newfoundland in 1844, he had been a follower of Cardinals Newman and Manning in the 'Oxford Movement'.<sup>59</sup> He continued therefore to install Tractarian clergymen and remove those opposed to him.<sup>60</sup> The result was that the Church became so molded to Field's image that the Low Churchman, Governor Hamilton, felt constrained to withdraw as a patron of the Newfoundland Church Society because he could no longer "... sanction proceedings which are not in harmony with the character of the Church of England..."<sup>61</sup> and which he entirely disapproved.

However, the growth of Tractarianism in the Church of England was not only a bitter blow to Low Churchmen but even more so to Wesleyan Methodists. The latter became highly incensed at Tractarian clergymen who condemned Wesleyan sacraments and re-christened, re-baptized or re-married those who had received those rites from Wesleyan ministers.<sup>62</sup> In the field of education Tractarian tendencies in the Anglican Church destroyed any chance for co-operation with the Wesleyan and contributed immensely to the forging of a political alliance between

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<sup>59</sup> Edward Morris, *Diaries and Journals*, June 12, 1876.

<sup>60</sup> *Iatt*, N.P.

<sup>61</sup> C.O. 194/140, ff. 83-86, Hamilton to Newcastle, November 19, 1853, inclusive, Hamilton to Bridge, March 7, 1853.

<sup>62</sup> The Public Ledger, April 23, 1851; also The Morning Courier, September 23, 1854, March 10, 1855.



the Wesleyan Methodist Conference and the Roman Catholic Church. Remembering that the 1843 Education Act had instituted a separate Roman Catholic and Protestant education system on a seven year trial basis<sup>63</sup> that Act was due to expire in 1850. Meanwhile, Tractarianism had moved the Church of England to such a position by that date that their alliance with the Protestant Dissenters was about to be severed. Hugh Hoyles, the leading Assembly spokesman for the Church of England, moved for sub-division of the Protestant education grant early in the session of 1850.<sup>64</sup> By this measure the Anglican Church sought complete control of their own schools which meant that the existing Protestant education grant would need to be divided on a per capita basis while existing school property would be distributed in the same manner. That, of course, would be very equitable to Hoyles' Church, which constituted approximately seventy per cent of all Protestants, but it would seriously affect the education of Dissenters. Divided into three groups and scattered throughout the Colony the minor Protestant sects would not be capable of maintaining their own schools on a grant given on a per capita basis. In addition, because of inaccuracies in the census of 1845, the Dissenters, mainly Wesleyans, were not confident of retaining school property in areas where they had a majority.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Above, p. 17.

<sup>64</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, St. John's, February 4, 1850; for debates on the Education Bill, 1850, see Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, February 12, 14, 21, 26, March 21, April 11, 1850.

<sup>65</sup> The Morning Courier, April 18, 1860.

Adequate education for their children, therefore, meant a continuance of the amalgamation with the larger Church of England. In the House the Dissenters, Falle and Job, engaged in protracted debate with Hoyles but their efforts would have come to nought had it not been for the intercession of the Roman Catholic liberals. Sensing the importance of an issue which could politically divide Wesleyans from Anglicans, they banished sub-division from the House and re-enacted, for another year, the Act of 1843.<sup>66</sup>

At the beginning of the session of 1851 numerous petitions against sub-division were presented to the House from Wesleyan Methodist congregations throughout the Colony.<sup>67</sup> Ignoring those protests the Episcopalian, Hoyles, renewed his performance of 1850 by producing the same Education Bill.<sup>68</sup> His efforts, however, met with the same results as the Catholic liberals, once again, defeated sub-division.<sup>69</sup> By this time, however, a significant defection from the Episcopalian camp had taken place. George Emerson, an Anglican and conservative member for the district of Twillingate and Fogo, had been a consistent supporter of the Government and now cast his vote against sub-division.<sup>70</sup> The

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<sup>66</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, St. John's, February 26, 1850.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, January 29, February 10, 1851.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, February 10, 1851.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, March 18, 1851.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, February 17, 1851.

opposition of the Low Churchman, Emerson, to Field's education policy was an encouraging sign, to the liberals, that the Anglicans were divided.

The controversy over educational sub-division became, quite naturally, much more heated in the election year of 1852 and developed into a major issue in Newfoundland politics. As Anglican petitions, in favor of sub-division, poured into the House from every area of the Colony so did the Wesleyans accelerate the movement against it.<sup>71</sup> In this background the question came up for debate almost immediately after the session opened.<sup>72</sup> Hoyles, once again, led the advocates of sub-division but this time Philip Little, liberal leader and Catholic member for St. John's, emerged as the leader of the opposition. Taking statistics as his guide Little demonstrated that Wesleyan educational interests would be adversely affected by sub-division in St. John's, Brigus, Harbour Grace, Carbonear, Trinity Bay North, West and South, Bonavista North and South, Fogo, Twillingate, Burin and Bonne Bay. Being a question of intense interest between Episcopalians and Dissenters, he pointed out, it, therefore, was a difficult question for Roman Catholics.<sup>73</sup> Yet, Roman Catholics had played a prominent part in the controversy since 1850. Up to this point, however, Roman Catholic liberals had not completely acted as a

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., February 19, 26, 1852.

<sup>72</sup> For debates on the Education Bill, 1852, see Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, St. John's, February 19, 26, March 12, 19, 23, 26, May 13, 14, 19, 21, 26, 27, June 9-11, 1852.

<sup>73</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 12, 1852.

unit in opposing sub-division. In 1851 Ambrose Shea, member for Placentia-St. Mary's had voted for sub-division because his conscience dictated that Anglicans should be given the same justice as had been accorded to Roman Catholics in 1843.<sup>74</sup> For the same reason he supported sub-division in the session of 1852<sup>75</sup> while the Catholics, Winsor and Prendergast, wavered between opposition to sub-division and support of a compromise measure.<sup>76</sup> However, in response to urgent appeals from the liberal leader, who was keenly aware of the political significance of the measure, all Catholic liberals except Shea, joined Little in defeating sub-division once again.<sup>77</sup> This, in the last session before a general election, witnessed the beginning of a struggle between the Assembly and the Council which amounted, almost, to a legislative deadlock on the subject. Charles Fox Bennett, a wealthy, Episcopalian, St. John's merchant, led the campaign for sub-division in the Council by declaring that "... the Episcopalians are unwilling to be controlled in the management of their schools by their Dissenting brethren."<sup>78</sup> He was assisted in his arguments by the other Anglican Councillors, Archibald, Crowdy and Row. Opposition came from the Catholic, O'Brien, the Congregationalist, Hoad and the Low Churchman, William Thomas.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., March 18, 1851.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., March 12, 1852.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Legislative Proceedings, Legislative Council, St. John's, April 14, 1852.

While third reading was adopted under the official protest of the latter the Education Bill was returned to the Assembly thoroughly amended out of shape.<sup>79</sup>

The lower house immediately rejected the Council amendments and a subsequent conference with the Upper House brought no results. In the latter body Bennett moved that the Council's amendments be adhered to while condemning the part played by Roman Catholics in the controversy. He could understand why the Wesleyans wanted to preserve the unnatural union of 1843 - because of the advantages given to them to the prejudice of Episcopallians. He condemned the Anglicans who opposed him and charged that Roman Catholics exhibited a poor spirit "... which he could not regard in any other light than that of gross persecution and unfair play towards their Episcopallian neighbours."<sup>80</sup> An alliance had taken place, he charged, between Catholics and Dissenters for purposes of stripping the Church of England of its rights and privileges, a union which he deprecated as 'unnatural' "... because there was no other common bond of union between them." As expected Bennett's motion was adopted and a committee was appointed to prepare instructions for a conference with the Assembly.

Once again the Lower House rejected the amendments while Philip Little showed no hesitation in urging the alliance of which Bennett had spoken.<sup>81</sup> They would not assent to the Upper House amend-

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, May 17, 1852.

<sup>81</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, May 19, 1852.

ments, explained Little, for too great an injustice would be done the Dissenters. Catholics and Dissenters must be firm, he warned, for 'The government of the Colony was in the hands of one religious party - the Episcopallians! and they made use of their position to strengthen their own power to weaken the efforts of all other denominations: and to better secure their ends in this respect," he continued, "they use every means to raise a cry of an attempt at religious ascendancy on the part of the Catholics."<sup>82</sup> That speech was the most extreme Little had delivered in the past two years, but it was significant of the feelings which had been generated on this subject. One week later Job reported to the House that the conference between the two Houses had broken down and they had arrived at a complete deadlock on the subject of education. The next day Job brought in a new Education Bill simply re-enacting the Bill of 1851 for another year. Hugh Hoyles, once again, lodged a vigorous assault upon non-division moving that the House go into Committee on the Council's amendments to the former Education Bill. Seconded by Ambrose Shea the motion was defeated by a large majority while Hoyles withdrew from the Assembly in protest. He soothed his wounded feelings by scornfully expressing the hope that the next House would be actuated by a different spirit - a spirit of justice to the Church of England. Job's Bill then easily passed with an amendment, tacked on by Emerson, requiring Protestant Boards to furnish, to the Executive, by the end of the year, full and detailed reports of the probable effects of sub-division. Emerson foresaw a long struggle and realized the subject would not be put at rest for a few years.

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

Nevertheless, the Legislative Council pressed the same amendments as they had previously presented.<sup>83</sup> Because of the lateness of the year (it was June 9) O'Brien was worried lest the Catholics be deprived of their funds for educational purposes because of the dispute between the Anglicans and other Protestants. Bennett and Row took this opportunity to castigate O'Brien, and his co-religionists in the Lower House, for preventing the dispute from being put at rest. While Bennett laid the blame on a Roman Catholic-Wesleyan alliance, Row charged that the Catholic majority in the Assembly had been the cause of the deadlock.

In the House of Assembly Emerson charged that the Council had interfered with the privileges of the Lower House by amending a bill appropriating expenditures.<sup>84</sup> He moved that the amendments be not received on those grounds. For the first time since the subdivision controversy began Ambrose Shea voted with his liberal colleagues and the motion was carried by a large majority. James Prendergast now came forward with a compromise Bill conceding sub-division in St. John's and Conception Bay. Still not satisfied Hoyles put forward numerous amendments and resorted to protracted delaying tactics. Patience exhausted, Little engaged with Hoyles in an immoderate exchange in which each attacked the other and insulted one another's religion. Then the Congregationalist Job announced that, because of the lateness of the year and because of the absolute necessity of coming to some arrangement,

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<sup>83</sup>Legislative Proceedings, Legislative Council, June 9, 1852.

<sup>84</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, June 9, 1852.



he would accept Prendergast's measure. Hanrahan, Winsor and Parsons admitted they would have to vote for it, out of expediency, as the Dissenters had accepted it. The latter's choice had been largely dictated by the fact that no monies would be voted for educational purposes at all that year if the struggle were continued. Lacking the power to overcome the Council Little regretted the compromise had been made and lamented that if the Government had been properly constituted the compromise would not have been necessary. Prendergast's measure was subsequently adopted by the Council and after five months of contentious debate an Education Bill became law.<sup>85</sup>

Meanwhile, the intrusion of Roman Catholics into a dispute between Episcopalians and Wesleyans had exacerbated relations between the former and the Church of England. On the other hand, the behaviour of Roman Catholics on sub-division of the Protestant education grant had cemented closer relations between Catholics and Wesleyans, while the Anglican Church had, more or less, driven both of them on to common ground. At the same time liberals, in the Assembly, had shown little reluctance to represent Wesleyan grievances against the establishment as a common cause with themselves and all Roman Catholics. There only remained the task of channelling those grievances in the direction of reform under the guidance of strong leadership and a thoroughly disciplined Liberal Party.

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<sup>85</sup>The Bill provided for sub-division of the education grant, which had heretofore been given to General Protestant Boards in St. John's and Conception Bay, to be distributed to separate denominational Boards, on a per capita denominational basis, in those areas.

## CHAPTER II

### LITTLE, MULLOCK AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE LIBERAL PARTY

Entering the decade of the 1850's the liberal party, in Newfoundland, lacked a unified and dynamic leadership both within, or without, the House of Assembly. Of the three leading liberals of the time, John Kent, Robert John Parsons and Lawrence O'Brien, the first-named was the most experienced. A fiery orator and member for St. John's, Kent had been first elected to the Assembly in 1832 and had been successfully returned in each election subsequent to that date. A Roman Catholic, brother-in-law of Bishop Fleming and member of the middle class of General Merchandise Importers, Kent was well qualified to lead an attack on the Church of England-wealthy mercantile class alliance. However, Kent's close identification with the 'Irish' establishment and his past notorious allegiance to the Fleming cause<sup>1</sup> was a severe limiting factor in his ability to broaden the base of liberal support. In addition, time, apparently, had mellowed the aggressiveness of John Kent who, having accepted governmental appointments under the Amalgamated Legislature,<sup>2</sup> continued the practice of compromising with the Government by accepting the Collectorship of Customs in 1849. Much to the disgust of his colleague, Robert John Parsons, Kent had believed that courting the Governor's favor was a

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<sup>1</sup>Above, Chapter I, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Gunn, pp. 92-93.

necessity in the Colonias, whereas outright opposition would tend to align the latter with the Tories making that party too strong for the liberals.<sup>3</sup> Parsons, on the other hand, desired no compromise with the existing political system and unsuccessfully urged Kent, during the 1848 election, to make Responsible Government the central issue in the campaign.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Parsons had differed with Kent over the latter's tendency to subject the party to rigid Roman Catholic direction and, as editor of the Patriot, had championed the cause of native, as opposed to Irish, rights.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, by 1851, those differences had taken on a personal flavor for, at that date, Kent was suing Parsons for libel, the latter having charged the former with embezzlement of certain charity funds.<sup>6</sup> It was unlikely, therefore, that either could unite behind the other and forge a strong Liberal Party.

As for Lawrence O'Brien, he had entered the House of Assembly for the first time in 1840. Representing the district of St. John's, the Roman Catholic O'Brien held a share, at least, in the leadership of the liberals. Perhaps he could be said to hold the titular leadership for in 1850 he had charge of the Increased Representatives Bill in the House of Assembly. That measure was the subject which was to become the basic issue of the Responsible Government movement and

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<sup>3</sup>Elizabeth A. Wells, 'The Struggle for Responsible Government in Newfoundland, 1846-1855' (unpublished Master's Dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1967), pp. 12, 15-18.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 15, 22-23.

<sup>5</sup>Gunn, pp. 90-91; also Great Britain, House of Commons, Select Committee on the State of the Colony of Newfoundland, 1841, evidence of Capt. H. Geary, May 14, 1841.

<sup>6</sup>The Newfoundland Express, November 13, 1851.

was to develop into the most contentious of the political issues of the 1850's. Party government, it was widely believed, could not work efficiently in a small elected House of only fifteen members and the importance of enlarging the Assembly could not be exaggerated. In fact, some believed that increased representation, once accomplished, would render Responsible Government inevitable.<sup>7</sup> Even the Colonial Office considered the limited Representation a major obstacle to the introduction of self-government. A House of only fifteen members, Grey told the Governor, was "... quite inadequate to the efficient working of a system under which choice is to be made of the chief advisers of the Government, and of the principal officers of the administration, from the leading members of the Legislature."<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, the issue of Responsible Government could very well resolve itself into the question of representation in the Assembly for the manner of enlarging such could very well decide which Party would command the majority under the Responsible System. In those respects, the Liberals, now in control of the Lower House, would simply wish to double the existing arrangements thereby duplicating themselves. In addition, Liberals would be seeking to exploit Wesleyan-Anglican rivalries and needed to resist electoral sub-division, especially in Burin and Conception Bay. When O'Brien, therefore, introduced his Representation Bill in 1850 it revealed that the Liberals simply wished to double the representation of each of the nine constituencies.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>The Newfoundlander, October 17, 1850.

<sup>8</sup>Journal of the House of Assembly, St. John's, 1852, Appendix, pp. 83-85, Grey to LeMarchant, December 16, 1851.

<sup>9</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 27, 1850.

Nevertheless, O'Brien, in supporting the measure, put forward the usual party line - that electoral sub-division would create a closed borough system under the control of the merchants. Little animated discussion took place on the subject, however, for he failed to arouse any enthusiasm from his own side of the House. Although O'Brien's Bill passed the Assembly it received little attention from the public press other than a comment that it would provide a more cumbrous machinery for the working out of the Colony's comparatively simple affairs.<sup>10</sup> O'Brien's failure to represent the Increased Representatives Bill as an issue so significant as it ought to be is perhaps best demonstrated by the fact that he waited until near the end of the session to introduce it. With that in mind, and because it was not contemplated to come into effect until 1853, the Legislative Council passed it over until the next session.<sup>11</sup> Lack of enthusiasm and drive on the part of O'Brien were not the only limiting factors militating against his being the inspiration for the reformers. Engaged in extensive business operations O'Brien was the wealthiest Roman Catholic merchant in the Colony thereby possessing membership in the St. John's upper class. In addition, O'Brien, an Irish ex-patriate, had been, like Kent, tarred with the Fleming brush.<sup>12</sup> His leadership would not, therefore, be totally acceptable to an anti-mercantile party attempting to enlist support

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<sup>10</sup>The Public Ledger, April 19, 1850.

<sup>11</sup>Legislative Proceedings, Legislative Council, St. John's, April 14, 1850.

<sup>12</sup>Flizzard, p. 21.

from denominations other than Roman Catholic and his presumption to that position was removed when he accepted, after the session of 1850, an appointment to the Upper House.<sup>13</sup>

O'Brien's vacant seat in the Assembly was captured, in November, 1850, by Philip Francis Little. The latter, a Roman Catholic and former resident of Prince Edward Island, had arrived in the Colony in 1843 thereby acquiring the distinction of being the sole Roman Catholic lawyer in Newfoundland.<sup>14</sup> Possessed of a training which usually constituted eligibility for political office during that era Little soon became a close friend to the Roman Catholic Bishop. Winning an easy election contest in 1850 he declared his platform to consist mainly of an immediate increase of representatives and acquisition of Responsible Government.<sup>15</sup> That platform, certainly, gave encouragement to all liberals but what showed greatest promise was the possibility that Little could unite the Liberal Party and provide the leadership it required. Although a non-native, Little was not an ex-patriate Irishman and, being new to Newfoundland politics, he remained unscarred by the Colony's past political battles that marred relations between Kent and Parsons. Therefore, he could perhaps provide the leadership behind which the latter two could unite. That the possibilities of such becoming the case were very real can best be demonstrated by the fact that both Kent and Parsons proposed and seconded, respectively,

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<sup>13</sup>Above, Chapter I, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>The Public Ledger, May 16, 1851.

<sup>15</sup>The Newfoundlander, September 19, 1850.

the nomination of Philip Francis Little as a candidate to serve in the House of Assembly for St. John's in the year 1850.<sup>16</sup>

Entering the Assembly in the session of 1851 Little took the initiative on the Representatives Bill as early as February 12. Producing the same Bill as O'Brien had championed a year earlier Little, supported by Kent, denounced sub-division of electoral districts as a tool of class interests. Merchants could more easily influence smaller ridings, they argued, and Little believed that the existing arrangements would "... preserve inviolate the fundamental principles of liberty in this country."<sup>17</sup> Naturally did the liberal leader feel satisfied with the present divisions as a majority for his Party had been returned under those conditions. No wonder, then, was he reluctant, as O'Brien had been, to interfere with the existing arrangements.

In spite of Little's oratory the real object of the Bill was not lost on Hugh Hoyles, the conservative leader. Charging the liberals with seeking merely to duplicate themselves he moved an amendment establishing twenty districts returning thirty-two members.<sup>18</sup> Differing from his Bill of last session, by the addition of one member, Hoyles and his Party did not appear to have a consistent policy on the subject. Nevertheless, although the amendment was lost, yet, upon

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., November 21, 1850.

<sup>17</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, February 20, 1851.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.



moving that Little's Bill be reported from Committee, it was discovered that two liberals had disappeared from the House. The supporters of the measure were, therefore, left in a minority and, to the consternation of Philip Little, the Bill was lost.<sup>19</sup> Less, therefore, had been accomplished in that direction during the 1851 session than in the previous year when O'Brien had charge of the measure. Confusion reigned for a few days as to what had actually occurred until eventually it became clear that Ambrose Shea and John Delaney, members for Placentia-St. Mary's, were the two renegade liberals.<sup>20</sup> Their behaviour was deplored in the Liberal Press, while Shea attempted an explanation by professing his belief that he thought the Bill had already passed.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, Edward Morris, liberal supporter and cashier of the Savings Bank, noted in his diary in respect of Shea's excuse that it was "... a lame meaningless thing quite characteristic of the writer."<sup>22</sup> While Shea, on the surface at least, professed no desire to seriously differ with his leader on the question, it must be remembered that he had voted against the same Bill in the previous session.<sup>23</sup> In addition, Shea had also bolted Party ranks to vote for sub-division of the

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, February 24, 1851.

<sup>20</sup> Coming from a family which had consistently opposed the Priest's party in politics Shea was, perhaps, wary of Little's association with the Roman Catholic Church; see C.O. 194/99, ff. 3-20, Prescott to Glenelg, October 14, 1837, enclosure No. 4, Shea to Crowdy, September 9, 1837; Delaney was, perhaps, following the lead of his more illustrious colleague.

<sup>21</sup> The Newfoundlander, February 25, 1851.

<sup>22</sup> Morris, February 27, 1851.

<sup>23</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 27, 1850.

Protestant education grant.<sup>24</sup> The latter subject, in spite of Little's efforts on the Representatives Bill, still remained the most contentious of political topics in the House with a second liberal, James L. Prendergast, wavering between support of Little's position and that of Hoyles.<sup>25</sup> In spite of the fact that the liberals had a new leader they proved incapable of moving as a single unit and the session of 1851 proved more disastrous than that of 1850. Either the Party would need to be more severely disciplined in the House or those who refused to toe the line would have to be discarded before the next election in favor of more obedient servants. The session of 1852 would prove, therefore, to be highly important for it was the last session before dissolution.

Politically, the election year of 1852 was to prove one of the stormiest on record for the lethargy of the past two years was to degenerate into a 'war of creeds'. With respect to the prominence of religion we must remember, firstly, the strong influences operating to give political debates that particular flavor. As political battling on the subject of increased representation was to become so intense in the election year of 1852 we must recall that, so far, Roman Catholic majorities had promoted the question in the House of Assembly. O'Brien's Bill for doubling the number of representatives had, in the session of 1850, been carried by Roman Catholic votes with the lone exception of R.J. Parsons.<sup>26</sup> Failing passage through the Assembly in 1851 Little's

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<sup>24</sup>Above, Chapter I, p. 22.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 27, 1850.

Bill had been advocated by Roman Catholic members with the lone exception of that category being, once again, R.J. Parsons.<sup>27</sup> The latter, editor of The Patriot newspaper, belonged to the Low Church wing of the Church of England but represented, in the House of Assembly, the Roman Catholic constituency of St. John's.

The fact that 1852 was an election year would contribute, in part, to a lively session of the House, but even at the termination of the 1851 session there were indications that debates over Representation would assume the character of politico-religious struggles. During that session the Protestant Ledger charged that the tyrannical priests put Little in his seat whose Representation Bill sought to give Roman Catholics the Ascendancy. Anticipating the coming elections it complained that "... the great objections to coming elections in this Colony rests upon the influence of the Roman Catholic priesthood...."<sup>28</sup>

Contemplating an election campaign in the wake of the political reverses of 1851 must have been somewhat disheartening to Philip Little. If success were to be accomplished in the Representation struggle the Liberal Party would need to be whipped into shape in the House of Assembly for in large measure debates on the Representation Bill would determine the tenor of the campaign. That task became much more clearly a necessity for Philip Little as a result of the receipt, early in 1852, of the British Government's decision on Responsible Government for Newfoundland.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., February 24, 1851.

<sup>28</sup> The Public Ledger, March 14, 1851.

In response to an Assembly request for Responsible Government the Colonial Office doubted the expediency of granting the principles of self-government "without its having been ascertained ... that their introduction would be in accordance with the deliberate wishes of its inhabitants." Her Majesty had been advised to decline complying with the prayer of the address, the Colonial Secretary informed Governor Hamilton, because "no such preponderance of opinion in favor of the introduction of what is termed Responsible Government has, as yet, been discernible in Newfoundland."<sup>29</sup> Communicated to the House of Assembly early in February, 1852, that reply galvanized pro-self-government sentiment into full-fledged, sustained action. If Responsible Government had been turned down because Newfoundland public opinion had not demanded it certainly that was the signal for political agitation on that question, outside the House. Rendering the subject the dominant and all embracing political issue in Newfoundland the British reply really amounted to a request for the whole Colony to consider it. Liberal politicians had, thereby, been relieved of the burden of attempting to make Responsible Government the central election issue. Great encouragement was also given to the Liberal Party by the importance attached to an increased representation for the Assembly. One of the greatest obstacles delaying the introduction of self-government in Newfoundland, Secretary Grey pointed out, was the limited number of members in the House of Assembly. Fifteen representatives, he had declared, were "... quite inadequate to the efficient working of a

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<sup>29</sup>Journal of the House of Assembly, 1852, Appendix, pp. 83-85, Grey to LeMarchant, December 16, 1851.

system under which choice is to be made of the chief advisers of the Government, and of the principal officers of the administration, from the leading members of the Legislature."<sup>30</sup> Although Grey's Despatch may have postponed the inauguration of Responsible Government yet it defined, for the Liberal Party, the two steps to be won in order to acquire the great boon. Once dominating the Assembly the Liberals could feel confident that failure of an Increased Representation Bill would be blamed on the mercantile, Anglican-dominated Upper House.

Coming near the beginning of the 1852 session of the House, and at a moment when the Assembly was in the midst of discussions on Little's Representation Bill, the reaction was vigorous and sustained. Almost immediately the head of the Roman Catholic Church in the Colony publically set himself squarely behind the Liberal Party in its quest for reform of the Constitution. Addressing himself to Philip Little, in a letter meant for public consumption, Bishop Mullock, in no uncertain terms, condemned the present government and urged Roman Catholics to demand the Responsible system.<sup>31</sup> "I was never more pained in my life," began his never-to-be-forgotten letter, "than when reading this evening the insulting document, forwarded by the Colonial Secretary, in answer to the address for Responsible Government.... I feel the illjudged and irritating Despatch," he continued, "an insult to myself and to my people." As Grey's Despatch had complimented the existing government on its satisfactoriness to Newfoundland Mullock took particular pains

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> The Patriot, February 16, 1852, Mullock to Little, February 7.

to repudiate the claim and did so in terms of opprobrium. "Acquainted as I am with many forms of government," Mullock pronounced, "... I solemnly declare that I never knew any settled government so bad, so weak, or so vile as that of our unfortunate country; Irresponsible, drivelling despotism, wearing the mask of representative institutions, and depending for support alone on bigotry and bribery. I see the taxes wrung from the sweat of the people, squandered in the payment of useless officials; the country, after three centuries of British possession in great part an impenetrable wilderness, its people depressed, its trade fettered, its mighty resources undeveloped, and all for what? To fatten up in idleness, by the creation of useless offices, exorbitantly paid, the members of a clique." Expressed in those terms there could be no doubt left in anybody's mind with respect to the position of the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, the present government was no longer to be given a fair trial for, Mullock pointed out, "my silence would betray the cause of justice and of the people." There, then, followed a call for all honest men to unite and appeal to the British Parliament.

To the Roman Catholics of the Colony reform of the constitution now took on quite a different aspect. While agitation for Responsible Government had hitherto been a subject of which Catholic priests had been accused of aiding behind the scenes now the Roman Catholic Church had openly declared its official position. "... It is the duty of a Bishop," declared Mullock, "to aid and advise his people in all their struggles for justice, and I have no other desire than to see justice done to the country, and equally administered to all classes...." Thus Mullock spoke as a Bishop casting the battle in

terms of good and evil, and what had once been a subject for argument now became, for Roman Catholics, a duty.

Within a few days of the receipt of Mullock's letter Little convened a mass public meeting in St. John's.<sup>32</sup> Attended by five or six thousand people, mostly Roman Catholics, resolutions on Responsible Government were proposed by John Kent, Ambrose Shea, Philip Francis Little, G.J. Hogsett and R.J. Parsons. Mullock's letter was read to the cheering multitude while R.J. Parsons was the lone non-Roman Catholic to take a prominent part in the proceedings.

Protestant reaction to those happenings, especially Mullock's letter, was swift and indignant. The Public Ledger condemned Mullock's phraseology in reference to the Newfoundland Government and declaring it unbefitting a gentleman who held an office of his kind.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile Governor LeMarchant reported to the Colonial Office that the war of creeds was as bitter and rankled as deep as it ever had been in Newfoundland's political history. Identifying himself with the Hovies party he uttered the latter's sentiments and laid the blame on the Roman Catholic Church and Catholic priesthood. Philip Little, he informed Secretary Grey, was the organ of the Roman Catholic Bishop and on these the LeMarchant fastened the blame for the failure of a Representative Bill. It "... would have been carried in 1850 as also in 1851," declared the Governor, "If the Roman Catholic Party in the House of Assembly had been contented with an equitable arrangement in the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., February 16, 1852.

<sup>33</sup> The Public Ledger, February 17, 1852.



allotment of the number of members to the several districts; but that section having the preponderance of votes in their favor in the House as at present elected, was determined so to frame the measure, that the whole political power would be vested in their hands which was very naturally rejected with indignation by the whole Protestant Party...."<sup>34</sup> LeMarchant was representing the struggle as purely a religious battle prompted by the desire for power on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church. With exaggeration more extreme than that emanating from either of the political camps he declared that no Protestant was in favor of any change in the existing constitution and that Grey's Despatch had been received without a dissentient voice from the whole Protestant community. Although he could not have taken a poll of every Protestant in Newfoundland he chose, also, to ignore the fact that R.J. Parsons, at least a nominal Protestant, was a prominent advocate of Responsible Government. As for Mullock's letter to Little, it was "an inflammatory epistle" calculated to arouse "... to the highest degree, all the worst passions of a populace of so easy and excited a temperament as that comprising the town of St. John's where the Roman Catholics greatly outnumbered (three to one) the Protestant community." The time is coming, LeMarchant warned Grey, when it must be decided "... whether the administration of this Island is to remain in the hands of the Governor appointed by the Crown or whether it is to be surrendered into those of the Roman Catholic Party to be wielded by their Bishop at his own individual will and discretion ...." Rather unfortunate it was for the Liberal Party that the Governor should take

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<sup>34</sup>C.O. 194/136, ff. 23-29, LeMarchant to Grey, February 13, 1852.

such a definitive position with respect to Responsible Government. With such one sided views going to the Colonial Office they could serve but to delay the inauguration of constitutional reform. In fact, LeMarchant's adamant stand would contribute to the intensification of political struggles for he expressed his determination, also, to oppose and amend, in alliance with his Council, all Representation Bills sent up by the present majority in the Assembly.

Unfortunately, because of the nefarious machinations of the Catholic Church under Bishop Fleming, it was natural for Protestants to look upon that organization with suspicion. However, the almost complete unanimity with which the Roman Catholics greeted their Bishop's recent pronouncements indicated that, perhaps, the Protestant suspicions may have been unfounded. Instead of creating dissensions among Catholics, as Fleming's campaigns had done, Mullock's public stand seemed, rather, to create unity instead of division. The presence of Ambrose Shea<sup>35</sup> on the platform with John Kent lauding the Bishop's words was, perhaps, a real indication that things had changed. The basic factor in this situation seems to have been provided by a change of leadership in the Catholic Church. Having arrived in Newfoundland when Fleming was in falling health, Mullock had succeeded to the Bishopric two years later. In comparison with his predecessor Mullock demonstrated considerable respect for his adopted land by bringing his family to live in St. John's<sup>36</sup> and by his advocacy of local improvements for the Colony. In the same

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<sup>35</sup>Above, p. 39.

<sup>36</sup>E.B. Foran, "Right Reverend Doctor Mullock, Bishop Militant," Centenary Souvenir Book, ed. Fr. P.J. Kennedy (St. John's: Robinson and Company Limited, 1955), p. 233.

year of his consecration Mullock began to advocate, for Newfoundland, telegraphic communication<sup>37</sup> with Europe and America, an advocacy which was later to include steam communication<sup>38</sup> with those continents and road building<sup>39</sup> in the outports. Mullock's 'Newfoundland' orientation extended to his governing of the Church, a field which, in comparison to Fleming, he proved himself of "... wider and nobler views...."<sup>40</sup> Instead of rejecting the idea of a native priesthood, which Fleming had feared, Mullock commenced, almost immediately, the erection of a diocesan seminary in St. John's.<sup>41</sup> His lack of prejudice against native sons was well demonstrated when, in 1850, he ordained the first native priest and received into the convent the first native nun.<sup>42</sup> However, his pro-native leanings were, perhaps, best demonstrated by his avowed support of Philip Little<sup>43</sup> Instead of placing his backing behind the Irishman, Kent. In addition, Mullock's advocacy of Responsible Government placed him in the class of liberal reformers fighting a good cause - a luxury which Bishop Fleming had never enjoyed. There was a strong likelihood, therefore, that the Catholic feuds, which

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<sup>37</sup>Rev. E.P. Roche, "The Right Reverend John Thomas Mullock, D.D. 1807-1869," Centenary Souvenir Book, ed. Fr. P.J. Kennedy (St. John's: Robinson and Company Limited, 1955), p. 227.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Howley, p. 390.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 391.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 393.

<sup>43</sup>Above, p. 37.

had marked the times of Bishop Fleming, could be avoided while the Liberal Party was accorded a real opportunity to develop along broader lines with a wider denominational appeal. Mullock's outright support of the reform movement, therefore, did not necessarily preclude wider Protestant support for the liberals.

Meanwhile, the degeneration of the political struggles into religious warfare continued with a meeting of the Commercial Society. The latter organization declared its opposition to Responsible Government by passing a resolution sponsored by C.F. Bennett and W.B. Row. In moving the resolution Bennett stated that Responsible Government would be inexpedient and unjust at that time; inexpedient because there were only fifteen members in the Assembly; unjust because "... under the present division of electoral districts the majority of the Assembly are returned by the influence of the Roman Catholic Clergy, although the majority of the population are Protestants."<sup>44</sup> To concede Responsible Government now, charged Bennett, would be to transfer the government of the Colony "... over to the government of the Roman Catholic Bishop." In echoing Bennett Row declared himself against government from the Bishop's Palace and expressed a desire for a division of districts so that "... all denominations of Christians in the Colony would be so cut up and divided that sectarian views could not be carried by one party to the injury of another."<sup>45</sup>

Lawrence O'Brien, the only Roman Catholic member of the Society, constituted the lone opposition to Bennett's motion. Charging

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<sup>44</sup>The Pilot, February 28, 1852, report of a meeting of the Commercial Society.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

that the real ascendancy was to be discovered in the present system O'Brien reminded Bennett that the former was the only Roman Catholic in the Council which ought, also, to include Methodists. Bennett retorted that O'Brien ought to look at past elections for evidence of Roman Catholic attempts at ascendancy: "Protestants waylaid in the open day, mutilated, handcuffed, gagged, blindfolded, taken to places unknown and submitted to the interrogations of a secret inquisition."<sup>46</sup>

To charges such as those against the Catholic Clergy Mullock felt constrained to reply and, for the second time within two weeks, rushed into public print an extensive epistle immersing, more deeply than ever before, the Roman Catholic Church into Newfoundland's political struggles.<sup>47</sup> Denying that Roman Catholic priests had participated in the last general election Mullock went on to define the role of the clergy in election contests. "Let me not however be understood to condemn the interference of the clergy at elections," began what was really to become a 'manifesto' for Catholic priests in Newfoundland's political engagements. "I cannot see," pronounced the Bishop, "why a Priest is to be deprived of his right of citizenship more than anyone else; he pays his portions of the public burthens; he is subject to the same laws; his interests are affected by the return of a member as well as those of another.... A Priest by his ordnance does not forfeit the privileges of a British subject; every elector under a Representative Government has not alone a right to

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> The Patriot, March 1, 1852, Mullock to the Editor, February 25.

vote for himself, but to canvass others to vote with him. Deprive any citizen of that right and he is a freeman no longer." Advocating political rights for his Priests on the basis of their possessing citizenship as every other British subject Mullock stood on solid ground but, in oratorical tones, he then proceeded to accord to the Priesthood a role far superior to that of any other human creature. "Every man's position gives him a certain amount of influence," postulated the Bishop. "The landlord has it in England; the merchant in Newfoundland; the Priest everywhere,..." But while the influence of the former two was exercised by pressure, the influence of the Priest, proclaimed Mullock "... is moral influence - vote for such a candidate for he will make the best representative; he is no jobber, no place seeker, no bigot, he will represent our sentiments better than the other. The one appeals to the pocket, the other to the people's feelings, or prejudices as some would say. The people know that individually to the Priest, the return is of little importance; that he only influences them to do what he considers best; that his interests and theirs are identified; they believe him to be a disinterested guide; they venerate his sacred character; they respect him as a man superior in education and acquirements to themselves; all this gives him a powerful influence which they believe has never been exercised except for their benefit." Mullock's epistle, while charged with superlatives and emotionalism, proved that his sense of reason had been overcome by vanity. While in one paragraph he declared election returns to be of little importance to the Priests, individually, yet in another he pronounced their interests to be affected by the returns as everyone else.

But that was not his greatest error. On the one hand Mullock had claimed a political role for his Priests on the basis of their equality with other citizens, a claim with which few could argue. On the other hand he contemplated the good influences of his servants being so effectually exercised because their 'Priestly' character qualified them to do so. But the influence of the Priest, with the sanctions of the 'One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic' Church behind him, remained so powerful in the Catholic Community that such could easily become an 'undue' influence. While the union of 'Priest' and 'common citizen' could easily be overlooked by the average Roman Catholic, it was precisely the 'Priest as Parson' to which the Protestants found greatest objection in politics. While admitting the right of Priests to vote and use lawful influences during electioneering a correspondent of The Public Ledger put it very well for all Protestants when he declared that "... it would have been more candid for Dr. Mullock to have informed us that the Confessional was the great source of Priestly influence as few like to run counter to the wishes of their soul-breakers and keepers of their conscience."<sup>48</sup> He then called on all Newfoundlanders to awake from their apathy and save the Colony from priestly domination.

Another correspondent while declaring that "Liberty and the Romish faith are incompatible" appealed to all Protestants to unite and save Newfoundland from the tyranny of the Roman Catholic Priesthood.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>The Public Ledger, March 5, 1852, 'Janus' to the Editor.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., March 12, 1852, 'Juvenis' to the Editor.



The Newfoundland Express, another government supporter, pointed out that the main point was not whether the Priests' influence was legitimate or not, but that "... such power exists, that the intention of exercising it is avowed, and that the present division of districts will with ease enable the clergy to command a majority in the Assembly, who, of course, would be subservient to their wishes."<sup>50</sup> An Assembly so constituted, it concluded, would serve as the exponent "... of the very worst description of despotism." What the Express and Ledger most clearly realized was that Mullock's latest pronouncements bordered on 'Flemingism'. Surely the conservatism of the Catholic Church was plainly visible in the Bishop's grandiose conception of the character and role of his priests. Behind this postulation of their good purpose lurked the temptation to control and direct political fortunes. To Philip Little, whose salvation must lie in preventing the Party from coming under the control of the Church, the latest warning of the Express must have given some reason for fear.

Meanwhile, in the Council and Assembly, Church rivalries had become the dominant issue in the debates over the Representation Bill. With the big battle coming in the Committee stages Little, advancing the same Bill as that of last session, urged its adoption with the same old arguments.<sup>51</sup> However, when Little produced a table showing the relative Party returns under the Bill it disclosed a new interest bearing upon representation.<sup>52</sup> A brief glance at the table

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<sup>50</sup>The Newfoundland Express, March 6, 1852.

<sup>51</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, February 20, 1852.

<sup>52</sup>See Table V.

TABLE V

DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS, BY DISTRICTS, ACCORDING TO  
THE REPRESENTATION BILL PRODUCED BY PHILIP LITTLE  
IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, ST. JOHN'S, FEBRUARY 20, 1852<sup>a</sup>

## LIBERAL PARTY:

St. John's	would return 6 members for 25,196 population					
Conception Bay	"	"	3	"	"	11,500
Ferryland	"	"	2	"	"	4,370
Placentia-St. Mary's	"	"	4	"	"	6,472
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15 liberals in all, or 1 for every 3,175 population						

## OTHER SIDE:

Conception Bay	would return 5 members for 16,500 population					
Trinity Bay	"	"	2	"	"	8,800
Bonavista Bay	"	"	2	"	"	7,227
Twillingate-Fogo	"	"	2	"	"	6,744
Burin	"	"	2	"	"	4,385
Fortune Bay	"	"	2	"	"	2,920
Bonne Bay	"	"	1	"	"	2,180
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16 members in all, or 1 for every 3,040 population						

<sup>a</sup>This table was presented by Philip Little, House of Assembly, St. John's, February 20, 1852.

will prove that Little had divided the districts into Roman Catholic and Protestant. In one column were placed the predominantly Roman Catholic districts, while in the other were placed the 'Protestant' districts. However, 11,500 Roman Catholics in Conception Bay were placed in the 'Liberal' column, while the 16,500 Protestants in that district were placed on the 'other side'. While nobody could, or did, argue with his returns for districts other than Conception Bay or Burin, those latter two districts were a special case. However, Little's admission of political divisions based on religious lines was perhaps his greatest error. In addition, the placement of Roman Catholics in the 'Liberal' column, with Protestants on the other side, was an indication of the difficulty in preventing religion from influencing the liberal cause.

Hoyles charged that Little's Bill would return a preponderance in favor of his own party, while they "... had a majority in the country" and he then moved for a division of Conception Bay into three districts returning six representatives.<sup>53</sup> While reluctant to discuss the issue in terms of religion Hoyles moved also for a division of St. John's so as to insure a mercantile return while subtracting one from Placentia-St. Mary's in order to add it to Trinity Bay. As the 'majority' which they had in the country was, obviously, a Protestant one Hoyles, however, was now openly fighting for mercantile representation. Both aspects of his amendment were attacked by John Kent and Peter Winsor. Kent charged that Hoyles altered the representation

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<sup>53</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, February 20, 1852.

In favor of the Protestants by taking a member from Placentia-St. Mary's and trying to get a Protestant return in St. John's. "The great difficulty in bringing this subject to a satisfactory conclusion," he postulated, "lay in the religious distinctions which pervaded the minds of honorable members...." Hoyles' intention, he charged, was to diminish Catholic influence and "... create the ascendancy of sect...."<sup>54</sup> Quite correctly he pointed out that merchants were now well represented in the Legislative Council while Winsor centred his attack upon that group. Blaming the merchants for all Newfoundland's troubles Winsor declared that "... if it were not for the well directed influence of the Catholic Priests, the country would be in a most pitiable condition, for there would not be a vestige of liberty in it and the people would be reduced to the most degraded condition of serfdom."<sup>55</sup> With those remarks Winsor had isolated an important point for to the merchants' influence he opposed that of the Priest. The strength of the former owed its origin to their economic power, a force to be reckoned with in Newfoundland politics. Bishop Mullock, Winsor, and company, obviously felt that such power could only be constrained by the force of religion, a force they intended to apply to the utmost.

With a large majority Little's Bill passed the Committee stage revealing that Andrew Shea, a renegade in the 1851 session, had united behind the liberals while, on the other hand, James L. Prendergast remained the lone liberal voting against it. The Independent Prendergast had declared himself against both Little and Hoyles and in favor of giving

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<sup>54</sup>ibid.

<sup>55</sup>ibid.

greater representation to the cutports "... In order to break down the existing overwhelming power which the local oligarchy of St. John's possessed over the representation of the country."<sup>56</sup> Discounting the idea of making religion the basis of representation Prendergast had offended both the Roman Catholic Church and the merchants. He would have to be replaced at the next election.

Within a few days the Representation Bill passed up to the Council while, in the meantime, Bishop Mullock published his second letter.<sup>57</sup> As expected the Council attacked the Bill with a vengeance. Immediately on second reading the representation was reduced from thirty-one members to twenty-nine by subtracting two from Placentia-St. Mary's, one each from Conception Bay and Bonne Bay. In addition, the representation of Trinity Bay and Bonavista Bay was each increased by one member.<sup>58</sup> Bennett argued that, in Little's Bill, Placentia-St. Mary's had too many representatives compared to Trinity Bay, Bonavista Bay and Fogo. On the other hand Bennett ignored the fact that Fortune Bay had too many compared with Ferryland or that Fortune Bay and Bonne Bay had too many compared to St. John's. Ignoring the Bill as a totality Bennett and his followers emphasized sections which appeared to disadvantage their side. However, second reading passed with only Lawrence O'Brien dissenting.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., Prendergast, a small Harbour Grace merchant disliked, perhaps, the rule of the St. John's middle class as much as that of the St. John's upper class.

<sup>57</sup> Above, pp. 44-46.

<sup>58</sup> Legislative Proceedings, Legislative Council, March 16, 1852.

While both sides admitted that, according to the census, Protestants deserved a majority of one yet in the districts of Conception Bay and Burin centred the problem. As demonstrated before those districts had a mixed population while the particular brand of Protestant favourable to Hoyles and Bennett had no guarantee of capturing either of them while Wesleyans held the balance of power. Nevertheless, the Council came to grips with the problem in Committee when Row moved for a sub-division of Conception Bay.<sup>59</sup> That amendment guaranteed the return of four Protestants while definitely securing the return of at least one Roman Catholic.<sup>60</sup> However, in his third division, where Protestants outnumbered Catholics, Row accorded the two representatives to the Roman Catholics from the reasoning that Protestants were equally divided between Anglicans and Wesleyans and thereby unsure of returning a member. While the liberals had shown themselves eager to exploit Wesleyan-Anglican rivalry to gain a member from the Protestants, O'Brien proved unwilling to depend on it for what he considered a just return for the Catholics. Objecting to the divisions O'Brien pointed out that it would render certain the return of only one Catholic. Row's amendment, he charged, would be regarded by Roman Catholics as "... a gross insult to them." The amendment carried against his objections. Then, before Committee rose, they divided St. John's into three districts to insure a mercantile return and, subtracting a member from Fortune Bay, they gave it to the area

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., March 19, 1852.

<sup>60</sup> Table VI.



west of Bonne Bay. It came back to the Assembly on March 31 in an entirely new shape.

TABLE VI

THE ELECTORAL DIVISION OF  
CONCEPTION BAY, ACCORDING TO W.B. ROW,  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MARCH 19, 1852

DISTRICTS	POPULATION		REPRESENTATIVES	
	ROMAN CATHOLICS	PROTESTANTS	ROMAN CATHOLICS	PROTESTANTS
1. Western Section (St. John's to Brigus)	3,230	767	1	0
2. Port de Grave (Brigus to Bryant's Cove)	2,627	7,262	0	2
3. Harbour Grace (Bryant's Cove to Crocker's Cove Brook)	4,772	Epis. & Diss. - Even	2	0
4. Eastern Division	1,441	3,998	0	2

On first reading of the Council's amendments Little urged that second reading ought to be dispensed with immediately as the amendments were of such a character as to be promptly rejected.<sup>61</sup> Pro-mercantile and anti-Catholic sentiments were behind the Council's amendments, charged Little. As for Ferryland and Placentia-St. Mary's, they

<sup>61</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 31, 1852.

had, in his opinion, received no increase from the Council because they were Roman Catholic. However, the liberal leader laid most of the blame on the desire of the merchants to combine their influence and stifle liberal sentiments. Notre Dame Bay, he pointed out, was not divided because the House of Slade already ruled it. As for Fortune Bay and Burgeo-La Poile, they should be divided as follows: "... the one district included within the first and last pages of the Ledger of Newman and Company, and the other included within the first and last pages of the Ledger of Nichol and Company."<sup>62</sup> When Prendergast suggested amending them Little declared it preposterous to expect the Council to give justice to the country. Their Bill encouraged sectarian opposition for "It was the latest dark intrigue," he declared oratorically, "the latest design of corruption - the last gigantic imposture which emanated from this government of intrigue, of political depravity, and unchecked, unscrupulous plotters against the rights, privileges and liberties of the people.... It would set the country," he concluded, "in one blaze of religious and sectarian animosity." While some members of his party thought it could be amended and sent up again Little insisted that the Bill be discarded entirely. While the opposition expounded on the lack of freedom in Roman Catholic countries Little attempted refutation by remarking on the good graces of the Catholic Kings, Alfred and John. Amidst the uproar Shea shouted that the matter be referred to the country at the next election, while Little led his liberal followers, in complete unison, to carrying his

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.



motion on a strict party vote. Even the stubborn James L. Prendergast was back in the liberal fold while John Delaney made his first appearance to vote with his leader. The Council's amendments were rejected as too insulting of consideration while the liberals looked to the coming election for a wider and stronger base of power.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ELECTION OF 1852 AND THE STRUGGLE OVER REPRESENTATION, 1852-1854

In the dying moments of the 1852 session of the Assembly Little had refused to carry the fight, about Representation, to the Council but this was not due to any reluctance to press the subject. On the contrary, realizing the importance of this question for the Responsible Government campaign, he wished to appeal to the public where a broader base of power would insure greater security of success in the struggle between the two Houses. That the acquisition of self-government, to a large degree, depended upon the results of the campaign had become rather evident with the receipt of Grey's Despatch of December 16, 1851.<sup>1</sup> While contemplating the hustings Little could look back, with satisfaction, at the results of the past session of the Assembly.

Compared with the previous two sessions political behaviour of the Liberal Party had, in 1852, demonstrated a remarkable degree of unison. As the debates over increased representation had intensified the struggle between the two Houses so had the liberals become more solidified as a political machine. Only Prendergast had exhibited a tendency to vote against his Party<sup>2</sup> while, when the dispute had climaxed

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<sup>1</sup>Above, Chapter II, pp. 35-37.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 50-51.

near the session's end, he did, by voting with his colleagues, prove he would rather court the liberals than the wealthier, St. John's, mercantile conservatives.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, apathy on the subject of Responsible Government had completely disappeared. Throughout the Colony it had become the all-absorbing, all-embracing topic of the day while the Roman Catholic Church, representing half the population, had officially declared its support of the question.<sup>4</sup> Signifying to all Catholics that they ought to support the Liberal Party Mullock's 'Dear Mr. Little' letter had been, also, an official proclamation that the 'Dear Mr. Little' was his chosen representative and leader of the Party. To Little, who represented a Catholic constituency while leading a Party consisting of either Roman Catholics or representatives of Roman Catholic districts, it must have come with some gratification to receive the public backing of the Roman Catholic Bishop. However, the liberal leader was still faced with the problem of acquiring substantial support from other classes of society.

Particularly as a result of Grey's Despatch<sup>5</sup> the Liberals would need to garner almost immediate support from other denominations. In furtherance of this aim they began to give paramount attention to the Wesleyans of the Colony. Politically speaking the Wesleyans, as a group, occupied much the same position as the Roman Catholics.<sup>6</sup> Both

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 37-39.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 35-37.

<sup>6</sup>Above, Chapter I, pp. 2-3.

groups were almost totally excluded from the Civil Service while none held positions in the Government. In enunciating their grievances against the establishment, Roman Catholics usually made the Wesleyan grievance part of their cause also.<sup>7</sup> So consistently did the liberals follow this line that, from 1850 onwards, Roman Catholics in the Assembly had interjected themselves into a specifically Anglican-Wesleyan dispute to champion the cause of the latter.<sup>8</sup> Making sub-division of the Protestant education grant their cause establishment Anglicans had created a further opportunity for liberals to obtain Wesleyan support. Lacking a representative in the House of Assembly the Wesleyans were not permitted to forget that defeat of sub-division depended on Roman Catholic votes. Reminding the Wesleyans of this fact the Catholic Pilot informed all Dissenters that their support would be expected at the ensuing elections. "We trust," declared The Pilot, "that the Dissenters having received the efficient support of the liberal members of the Assembly, in thus defeating the common enemy of our civil and political rights ... will prove themselves, at the next general elections, worthy of a continuation of that support."<sup>9</sup> In other words, if the liberals did not receive Wesleyan support the latter should not expect Catholics in the Assembly to continue to vote against sub-division. Throughout the campaign The Pilot continued to champion the Dissenters' cause while declaring that there had never been exhibited "... such a spirit of religious rancor and sectarian hatred as that which Sir

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<sup>7</sup>The Pilot, St. John's, March 6, 1852.

<sup>8</sup>Above, Chapter I, pp. 19-26.

<sup>9</sup>The Pilot, March 27, 1852.

Gaspard LeMarchant and his Council have manifested on the Education question."<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the Catholic Newfoundlander considered the question of sub-dividing the education grant as "an election issue next in importance to Responsible Government"<sup>11</sup> while R.J. Parsons, one of the liberal candidates for St. John's, made it one of the most important planks in his election platform.<sup>12</sup> In addition, liberal intentions to cooperate with Wesleyans were openly demonstrated when James L. Prendergast was discarded as their candidate in Conception Bay.<sup>13</sup> Prendergast, who had been the initiator of the Bill which brought sub-division to Conception Bay and St. John's,<sup>14</sup> was replaced by another Catholic who had the official support of the Roman Catholic Church and the Liberal Party. With a 'Bay Catholic' from Brigus declaring that the man who betrayed the Wesleyans on sub-division would never get a Catholic vote<sup>15</sup> Prendergast was left to run as an Independent.

While the liberal design to capture Wesleyan support remained in continuous operation until election day, yet considerable gains had been made in that direction throughout the year. Early in 1852 the big break came with the takeover of The Morning Courier by a

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<sup>10</sup> The Pilot, June 26, 1852.

<sup>11</sup> The Newfoundlander, August 30, 1852.

<sup>12</sup> The Patriot, August 23, 1852.

<sup>13</sup> The Pilot, November 13, 1852.

<sup>14</sup> Above, Chapter I, p. 25.

<sup>15</sup> The Pilot, October 2, 1852.

Wesleyan, Joseph Woods.<sup>16</sup> Becoming the only Wesleyan newspaper in the Colony The Courier became the advocate and champion of Wesleyan rights while expostulating demands for Responsible Government.<sup>17</sup> Basing its policy upon the sectarian aspect of the establishment The Courier, in the first three months under Woods, devoted itself almost exclusively to the battle over educational sub-division. Refuting the sub-division advocates, lambasting the establishment for sectarian ascendancy, continually attacking Hoyles and his followers, The Courier concerned itself almost wholly with the Wesleyan cause. Such a campaign could not be entirely satisfactory to the liberals who wanted nothing less than all-out support for the Party and its policy. On the other hand, liberals took satisfaction from The Courier's advocacy of Responsible Government but felt chagrined that Woods believed in the principle of sub-division of districts.<sup>18</sup> While Woods continually praised the Roman Catholics for their behaviour on educational sub-division and discounted the idea of Roman Catholic ascendancy, yet not a word was spoken on the subject of the Representation Bill. However, as the struggle between the Assembly and the Council reached its climax on the subjects of increased representation and educational sub-division The Courier began to realize that little was to be expected from the establishment. Having received liberal support on its important cause of education, The Courier, early in the spring, announced it had reconsidered

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<sup>16</sup>The Courier, January 3, 1852.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., January 31, February 7, 11, 21, March 3, 10, 13, 17, 20, 1852.

<sup>18</sup>The Patriot, January 19, 1852.

its position on increased representation. Chopping up a district, it now confessed, would only afford certain influences a greater opportunity to control whereas "... an undivided district gives each man a fair chance of bringing him away from such local coercion...."<sup>19</sup> The Wesleyan Courier was now completely in the liberal camp.

Throughout the remainder of the campaign The Courier concentrated on proving how valuable had been Roman Catholic support on the education question and ridiculing suggestions that a Roman Catholic government would result in loss of civil liberties.<sup>20</sup> Specifically Wesleyans in Conception Bay and, most particularly, in Burin would have to either remain neutral or switch their support to liberal candidates in order for the campaign to bring practical results. As for the education question the Roman Catholic Pilot felt constrained to assist The Courier by headlining 'A Word to the Dissenters'. The Pilot's reasoning was that Dissenters had reason to be grateful to the Roman Catholics for defence of the former's rights against Episcopalian sectarianism. But warned The Pilot, they must take broader ground than the education question or they will find "... they have reckoned without their host."<sup>21</sup> That they did take broader ground was demonstrated, particularly, by the election in Burin. There, the Wesleyans called out a former member of the Assembly, Clement Benning, to stand in their interest.<sup>22</sup> A Roman Catholic, Mr.

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<sup>19</sup>The Courier, April 3, 1852.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., May 22, June 19, July 3, September 25, 1852.

<sup>21</sup>The Pilot, October 2, 1852.

<sup>22</sup>The Courier, September 1, 1852.

Furlong, who had been canvassing the district, withdrew in Banning's favor while the conservative candidate, a Wesleyan, was scorned by The Morning Courier.<sup>23</sup> Contesting the district, on the liberal party ticket, Benning won an easy election victory.

Meanwhile, in Conception Bay the Liberal Party had dropped James L. Prendergast and replaced him with Thomas Talbot.<sup>24</sup> The former had been the object of attacks by The Courier for his betrayal of the Wesleyan cause on the education question<sup>25</sup> and, on his subsequent defeat, liberals could argue that Wesleyans could, perhaps, feel grateful to the Catholics of Conception Bay. In addition to Talbot the liberals sponsored two other Catholics, in the latter district, while the candidacy of the Anglican, John Hayward, for the liberals, demonstrated the folly of Anglican unity on the part of the conservatives.<sup>26</sup> Adherents of the latter denomination had, of course, always been less susceptible to Church sponsored politics than Roman Catholics yet the conservatives faced the problem, also, of attempting to activate Protestants against a popular cause - that of democracy and self-government. Instead, then, of backing an Anglican, the Hoyles Party concentrated on splitting the Wesleyan-Liberal alliance by supporting a Wesleyan merchant, John Hamister, of Carbonear. While the latter succeeded in defeating the third Catholic, it was, apparently, mainly as a result of a reluctance on the part of the voters to disturb the existing sectarian pattern of returning equal numbers of Catholics and Protestants. Even the liberal

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., October 13, 1852.

<sup>24</sup>Talbot was an Irish Catholic teacher of St. John's.

<sup>25</sup>The Courier, June 19, July 3, 1852.

<sup>26</sup>The Pilot, November 13, 1852.



Courier disliked the idea of disturbing the present arrangement<sup>27</sup> and, while the denominations split the district, yet liberals could be happy that three Responsible Government men had been returned.

However, while the support of the Roman Catholic Church and Priesthood was of considerable advantage to the Liberal Party, yet such support certainly contributed to impair relationships between the liberals and Protestants. The latter, of course, had generally speaking, an innate fear of the supposed monolithic power of the Church of Rome and its authority to command obedience from its subjects. Such fears, of course, had, without doubt, some basis in fact<sup>28</sup> while the open participation of the Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland politics had, in large measure, contributed to the liberal sweep of Catholic districts since 1836. Needless to say, due to the intensity of the political fervor, such fears of Roman Catholic conspiracy became exaggerated. Perhaps Governor LeMarchant typified the most extreme of those views when he reported to the Colonial Office on the absolute power of the Roman Catholic Bishop and Priests. Blaming Little and Mullock for sparking all the religious discord LeMarchant declared that any doubter would be convinced of Newfoundland's unfitness for Responsible Government if he had witnessed '... the violent proceedings of the Roman Catholic Party in the House of Assembly during the session just closed....'<sup>29</sup> With respect to the coming elections he said that the Catholic Church

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<sup>27</sup>The Courier, October 13, 1852.

<sup>28</sup>Above, Chapter I, pp. 8-11, 18-19.

<sup>29</sup>C.O. 194/136, f. 23, LeMarchant to Pakington, June 15, 1852.

was beginning to set on foot an agitation to return Catholic candidates "... and with such irresistible power and such crushing weight does the Roman Catholic Church control the minds and direct the conduct of the whole of that creed in this Colony that the end and results of this agitation may be most clearly foreseen...."

Whether the Roman Catholic Church possessed such power as LeMarchant believed only time would tell but the conservative campaign was based on the same premises. To Mullock's Intentions The Public Ledger imputed the most 'disgraceful' of motives and remarked upon "... the mysterious control which he sways over as deluded a population as may be found under any other canopy of heaven."<sup>30</sup> Charging The Pilot with treason The Ledger proclaimed that "... there is no such thing as civil liberty tolerated in the Romish Church ... that the ecclesiastical domination is for all purposes omnipotent!"<sup>31</sup> Responsible Government then must be resisted for it would make the Executive responsible to the Romish Bishop "... whose allegiance to the Queen ... we hold to be at least questionable ... and not very questionable either."<sup>32</sup> The Newfoundland Express trumpeted much the same charges.<sup>33</sup>

In the face of such a campaign the Wesleyans must have been perplexed as to whether to join with the Catholics or Episcopallians. Indeed, some aspects of the Catholic campaign were of such a nature as

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<sup>30</sup>The Public Ledger, June 22, 1852.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., September 10, 1852.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., October 1, 1852.

<sup>33</sup>The Newfoundland Express, March 6, August 5, 1852.

contribute to the justification of the Anglican charges. "Religion is supreme over politics" declared a Pilot article addressed to Catholic electors.<sup>34</sup> "Politics," it argued, "are a part of Ethics and Ethical Science is only a part of Moral Theology. Moral Theology, therefore, includes politics...." Reasoning from the premise that the state owed its origin from God it concluded that its laws must be in accordance with the laws of God as to who would decide whether any law was not in accordance with the laws of God the implication was clear that Roman Catholic Theology would do that. Another article in definition of the province of religion in politics compared it to the soul in the body - 'death beginning as soon as its vivifying action was stopped'. "But there is no religious principle except in Catholicism," it concluded, for "Protestantism is nothing more than absolute negation."<sup>35</sup> To some extent the 'Toryism' of the Catholic Church was emerging into public view and, to an objective observer, the problem of a reform party allied to a conservative Church must have been very real indeed.

Nevertheless, the Liberal Party did win four of the five seats in the key districts of Conception Bay and Burin. Having won St. John's without a contest, Ferryland with only token opposition, the two Placentia-St. Mary's seats gave them a total of ten representatives. However, what gave them greatest satisfaction was that support of the Anglican Hayward, and later defection of the Anglican Emerson<sup>36</sup> from the Conservatives, considerably enhanced the liberal claim to represent all denominations. Certainly the Protestants of Conception Bay had refused, to some extent,

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<sup>34</sup>The Pilot, October 9, 1852.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., October 23, 1852.

<sup>36</sup>Emerson joined the liberals early in 1853.

to be blindfolded by fears of Catholic ascendancy. In addition perhaps the class of outport merchants, represented by Emerson<sup>37</sup> and Hayward<sup>38</sup> no longer considered their interests to lie with support of the wealthy St. John's merchants. The Slades, Twillingate-Fogo merchants, who backed Emerson, and the Harbour Grace merchants behind Hayward had, since the 1830's, been facing mounting competition from the St. John's firms.<sup>39</sup> Such backing, however, was very welcome to the liberals who had, now, extended their base of support to the once 'conservative' strongholds. With this in mind, and considering the political advantages to be reaped by the Anglicans, Emerson and Hayward, the liberals need not so much be dependent on the Roman Catholics, at least in Conception Bay. They could afford to compromise on the Representation Bill and when that measure was sent to the Council in 1853 it revealed just such an arrangement.<sup>40</sup> The liberals had deducted one member from Placentia-St. Mary's while Conception Bay had been sub-divided into five electoral districts. However, it was now more imperative than ever for the minority conservatives to make their cause, a Protestant one. When an uproar developed in the Assembly on the question of responsibility for dragging sectarianism into the debates Hoyles rose to declare, proudly, that there was nothing wrong

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<sup>37</sup>Emerson was supported by the Slades, mercantile firm in Twillingate-Fogo; see The Patriot, March 12, 1855.

<sup>38</sup>The merchants of Harbour Grace apparently, supported Hayward; see Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, April 20, 1860, for speech of J.L. Prendergast.

<sup>39</sup>Marjorie Smith, "Newfoundland, 1815-1840: A Study of a Merchantocracy" (unpublished Master's Dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1968), p. 36.

<sup>40</sup>Table VII.

TABLE VII

PROBABLE RETURNS UNDER THE BILL PASSED BY THE  
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, AND SENT TO THE COUNCIL FOR  
THEIR CONCURRENCE ON THE 28TH MARCH 1853,  
ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1845<sup>a</sup>

	POPULATION	PROTESTANT.	CATHOLIC.	MEMBERS	
				P	C
St. John's district .....	25196	6210	18986		6
Conception Bay is divided into 5 districts, to return 7 members, viz:- Horse Cove to Cupids, Incl.	6719	2611	4108		2
Port de Grave to Bay Roberts, do ..	4612	3806	806	1	
Spaniards Bay to Harbour Grace, do.	6182	3698	2484	2	
Carbonear and Musquito, do.....	5070	2339	2731		1
Freshwater to Bay de Verds, do.....	5370	3929	1441	1	
Trintly district.....	8801	7518	1283	2	
Bonavista district.....	7227	5418	1809	2	
Pogo and Twillingate district.....	6744	5616	1128	2	
Ferryland district.....	4581	109	4412		2
Burin district.....	4358	2407	1951	2	
St. Mary's and Placentia district..	6473	1018	5455		3
Fortune Bay and LaPoile district...	5100	4708	392	2	
				14	14

<sup>a</sup>Journal of the Assembly, 1853, p. 239.

with bringing up something which was on everybody's mind. To neglect the religious character of representation, he stated, "... would be downright hypocrisy and criminal indifference."<sup>41</sup> Arguing from that premise Hoyles could then easily prove that, where Anglicans and Wesleyans were divided, as in Burin and in the second division of

<sup>41</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 21, 1853.

Conception Bay, Roman Catholics could be returned for Protestant ridings. Little, of course, had cleverly devised the Bill in that fashion in order to force Hoyles to admit that the Protestants of which the latter spoke were Anglicans. If the conservative leader were forced to declare that 'Anglican' divisions were his object the breach between that party and the Wesleyans would become much wider. However, with such a small minority in the Assembly Hoyles dispensed with the task of proposing formal amendments and passed the duty over to the Legislative Council.

The latter body exhibited more reluctance than ever to meet the Assembly's demands on the subject of increased representation. In spite of the fact that the Assembly had shown some desire to compromise yet the Council produced the most drastic amendments to date.<sup>42</sup> Reducing the representation to twenty-six members the Council took one member from each of Placentia-St. Mary's, Ferryland and Burin, while adding an extra one to Trinity Bay. Dividing St. John's into two districts, so as to give a mercantile return, the Council concluded that an even number of Protestants and Catholics would be returned by their divisions. While no one could disagree that their arrangement would guarantee a return of thirteen Protestants an objective observer could understand that the return of only twelve Catholics would thereby be secured. It was to be expected that the latter would not care to 'depend' on Burin to furnish their complement of members no more than the Anglicans would for theirs. In addition to this objection the Assembly maintained that the third division of Conception Bay would

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<sup>42</sup>Table VIII.



TABLE VIII

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENTS TO THE  
REPRESENTATION BILL PASSED BY  
THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, MARCH 28, 1853<sup>a</sup>

	POPULATION.	PROTESTANT.	CATHOLIC.	MEMBERS	
				P	C
St. John's district to be divided in 2 districts.....	25196	6210	18986		6
Conception Bay to be divided into 4 districts, viz:.....					
Horse Cove to Colliers, inclusive	3183	672	3141		1
Colliers to Bryant's Cove do.....	9574	7358	2216	3	
Bryant's Cove to Crocker's Cove do	9200	4428	4772		2
Crocker's Cove to Bay-de-Verd.....	5439	3998	1441	1	
Trinity Bay district.....	8801	7518	1283	3	
Bonavista Bay district.....	7227	5418	1809	2	
Fogo district.....	6774	5616	1128	2	
Ferryland district.....	4370	169	4201		1
Burin district.....	4358	2407	1951		1
Placentia & St. Mary's district..	6473	1018	5455		2
Fortune Bay and LaPolla district.	5100	4708	392	2	
	96296	49521	46775	13	13

<sup>a</sup>Journal of the Assembly, 1853, p. 279.

give a divided return. Granted the Roman Catholic majority there was small but it cannot be seen how the Assembly could rationally maintain their argument on that score. With the exception of the quandary of Burin it must be admitted that, since 1850, the Council had produced

the most reasonable divisions to this point. Yet objection to the division of St. John's was to take a new turn in the Assembly. Heretofore liberals in the Lower House had objected to division of St. John's because it would amount to a measure of mercantile control and create a close borough in the business section of the capital. Maintaining that, by the Council's amendments two Protestants would be returned for St. John's, the majority in the Assembly based their opposition to the division on the grounds of religion.<sup>43</sup> Refusing to entertain the Council's amendments the Assembly rejected them on second reading and requested conferences with the Council. Spread over a three-week period the Assembly-Council conferences proved fruitless with each maintaining their first stated positions. Before parting the Council reminded the Assembly that the appellations, liberals (for Catholics) and conservatives (for Protestants), were "... mere titles of assumption or opprobrium, which, ... the Council think ... such terms and all others of the like tendency had better be avoided."<sup>44</sup> By inference the Council considered the terms Protestant and Catholic to be most proper.

Regardless of the fact that the election had proven an overwhelming success for the liberals yet the Council refused to be tractable in spite of the message recorded against them. Perhaps it had been in anticipation of an agreeable Council (and perhaps unwilling to add insult to injury after a bitter election) that Little had, at the

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<sup>43</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, May 21, 1853.

<sup>44</sup>Journal of the House of Assembly, 1853, pp. 278-279, message from the Council to the Assembly.



beginning of the debate, admitted a division of Conception Bay. Then again it may have been a genuine desire to please the Council in anticipation of a resolution of the problem in order for an early acquisition of self-government. Nevertheless, Little's division of Conception Bay had been his formal recognition that the crux of the problem rested with the apportionment of members according to religious affiliation. That such was the case can be attested to by the fact that the struggle between the two Houses had now reduced itself to a quarrel over the key districts of Conception Bay and Burin. As for the adamant stand taken by the Council in the face of such a large majority in the Assembly such can partly be explained by the fear of Roman Catholic ascendancy. If one can judge from the Governor's views those fears had become of paramount importance.

In reporting on the results of the election and on the Responsible Government question Governor Hamilton revealed his suspicions of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>45</sup> Those suspicions led him to indulge his personal opinions, in an extremist fashion, in his official reports to the Home Government. Firstly, Hamilton considered the power of the Roman Catholic Church to be so immense that it could move the whole Catholic population at will. In political, as well as in religious matters, he considered the entire Catholic population to be completely subservient to their Clergy and Bishop. Yet, if such were the case Hamilton would have to explain why, as he had charged, "Intimidation and actual coercion by the Priests"<sup>46</sup> were necessary during the election in Ferryland and Placentia. That the Roman Catholic Church did wield

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<sup>45</sup>C.O. 194/139, f. 27, Hamilton to Newcastle, February 21, 1853; also *ibid.*, f. 124, Hamilton to Newcastle, May 4, 1853.

<sup>46</sup>*ibid.*, Hamilton to Newcastle, February 21, 1853.

immense power over its subjects there was no doubt, but whether it was as complete as Hamilton alleged only time would tell. In addition, Hamilton charged that the power of the Roman Catholic Church was being exercised for the purpose of gaining a 'permanent Ascendancy'. How that was possible, in a country where Catholics constituted less than half the population, was really beyond reason. It was difficult to imagine even a temporary 'Ascendancy' for very long. However, Hamilton was convinced of its reality and was even more sure of its evil results. Newfoundland, he believed, was unique among North American Colonies in that the concession of Responsible Government would result in control by the Roman Catholic Bishop. That state of affairs, Hamilton warned, would "... involve consequences so momentous, in their results, to the moral, social, and political condition of the people that Her Majesty's Government may well hesitate as to its adoption."<sup>47</sup> With the Roman Catholic Bishop and Clergy in control of the Executive and Legislature "... the proceedings of the Legislature would be characterized by injurious excesses and those of the Executive by tyranny and caprice.... An oligarchy would be established," he concluded, "subversive of that freedom the enjoyment of which is the vaunted advantage of the desired change." No wonder then that the Council fought a strong battle when the Governor supported their position without reservation. No wonder, also, that the two Houses failed to arrive at a compromise when the person who was supposed to act as an 'impartial arbitrator' possessed such strong opinions in favor of one of the parties. As the Council and Assembly had arrived at a deadlock on the

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., Hamilton to Newcastle, May 4, 1853.

Issue the liberals, instead of forcing the issue, decided to take their case, instead, to the British Government. While Little and Parsons were on their way to London as delegates from the Assembly the Colonial Office, however, had already decided to grant Responsible Government to the Colony.<sup>48</sup> The liberal campaign of 1852 had been successful for, in spite of conservative warnings about Catholic ascendancy, the support gained from Wesleyans and Anglicans had convinced the Colonial Office that the self-government campaign was not wholly a Roman Catholic movement.

The liberals could look forward to the session of 1854 with unrestrained glee. Their aspirations had been fulfilled and Responsible Government would soon be a reality. Only an increase of members, with a geographical division of districts, was required before they formed a government.<sup>49</sup> However, the Council could argue that the Home Government, in a sense, had given them some degree of support by calling for a division of districts. To the liberals it was somewhat frustrating to realize that only the stubborn Council was now preventing the Liberal Party from taking power. Early in the session, therefore, the Assembly adopted an address to the Colonial Office objecting to the granting of Responsible Government being made contingent on a geographical division of the present districts. Division based upon territorial extent, they argued, "... would throw the elective power into the hands

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<sup>48</sup>C.O. 194/139, f. 124, Hamilton to Newcastle, May 4, 1853, marginal notes by Newcastle, N.D.

<sup>49</sup>The British Government awarded Responsible Government to the Colony with a suggestion that there be an increase of representatives and a geographical sub-division of districts; see Journal of the Legislative Council, St. John's, 1854, Appendix No. 3, pp. 98-99, Newcastle to Hamilton, February 21, 1854.

of the most scattered and isolated portions of our population and thereby unjustly act upon the more populous and wealthy settlements."<sup>50</sup> They, then, proceeded to enumerate all their old arguments against sub-division. Content with that official objection the liberals re-introduced their Bill of 1853 and, with three more compromises to please the Council, passed it by a strict party vote.<sup>51</sup> Sub-division had now been acknowledged in two more districts, St. John's and Fortune Bay-LaPoile while an extra member had been given to the Protestant district of Trintly. Little pointed out that those were concessions to the Conservative Party and provided for fair denominational returns. A thorough study, he said, will disclose that there are "... fifteen Protestants for 49,523 inhabitants and fourteen Catholics for 46,983 inhabitants according to their absolute majorities in the several districts; one Protestant member for 3,300 Protestant inhabitants, and one Catholic for 3,355 Catholics; while the average representation for the whole Island is one for 3,327; thus giving the Protestants an advantage of twenty-seven inhabitants on the general average right for every one of their fifteen members and the Catholics a disadvantage of fifty-five on each of their fourteen members compared with the Protestants, or an actual loss of twenty-eight inhabitants for every one of fourteen members, on their general average right."<sup>52</sup> The question of allocating members to religious denominations had become a problem of meticulous mathematics. Before concluding his extensive oration Little warned that

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<sup>50</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 24, 1854.

<sup>51</sup>Table IX.

<sup>52</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, April 6, 1854.



TABLE IX

REPRESENTATION BILL PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY APRIL 1854<sup>a</sup>

DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1845	POPULATION.	PROTESTANT.	CATHOLIC.	MEMBERS		PROPORTION FOR EACH MEMBER	NOTE: The Council stated last session, in their Conference, that 13 Protestant Members and 13 Catholic Members would result from their amendments on the Representation Bill of that session. The Bill of this session gives the power of returning 15 and 14; while the Assembly do not recognize the necessity or justice of obliging the districts to effect that result. It is more than probable the number of Protestant returns would be much larger under this Bill than 15; as Catholic districts would, doubtless, continue to return Independent Protestants, as they have hitherto done.
				P	C		
St. John's district is divided into 2 districts, by a line running North from Beck's Cove to Broad Cove.....	25196	6210	18986		6	4199	
District of Trinity.....	8801	7518	1286	3		2933	
District of Bonavista.....	7227	5418	1809	2		3613	
District of Fortune Bay.....	2920	2557	363	1		2920	
District of LaPolle.....	2180	2151	29	1		2180	
District of Ferryland.....	4581	182	4399		2	2290	
District of Burin.....	4358	2407	1951	2		2179	
District of Placentia-St. Mary's Conception Bay is divided into 5 districts, to return 7 members, for a population of 28,026, averaging 1 for every 4,000, viz:-.....	6473	1018	5455		3	2157	
Horse Cove to Cupids, Incl....	6722	2614	4108		2	3361	
Port de Grave to Bay Roberts..	4612	3806	806	1		4612	
Spaniards Bay to Hr. Grace....	6132	3698	2434	2		3091	
Carbonear to Mosquito	5071	2340	2731		1	5071	
Fresh Water to Bay de Verde..	5439	3988	1451	1		5439	
Twillingate & Fogo, Incl.....	6744	5616	1128	2		3372	
	96506	49523	46983	15	14		

<sup>a</sup>Journal of the Assembly, 1854, p. 192.

this was the last time they would attempt legislating with the Council. They were only doing so now, he declared, to meet the suggestions of the Colonial Office.

However, there were few objections that could, with justice, be offered against the Bill. Only Surin, which had proven an insoluble puzzle, really remained in doubt. Yet no opposition was offered on that score while the two Wesleyans, Bemister and March, objected to the Conception Bay divisions.<sup>53</sup> They contended that the return of two Wesleyans ought to be secured for the Bay while John Hayward, an Episcopalian who had helped frame the measure, would not agree to any change. While Hugh Hoyles remained conspicuously silent Little suggested that if they could work out an arrangement among themselves to guarantee the return of two Wesleyans for the Bay he would accept it. Apparently Hoyles did not want the Conception Bay divisions disturbed either as March moved, instead, for a division of Trinity Bay into three districts. One of those districts, the south shore of Trinity Bay, contained a large majority of Wesleyans which March used as a pretext for dividing the Bay into three ridings. Little was aware of March's desire to create 'nomination boroughs' and suggested instead that the western district, Freshwater to Bay de Verde, be extended round the peninsula into Trinity Bay to return two members. That was an equitable arrangement for the Wesleyans but March refused to accept it. He, apparently, wished to capitalize on Wesleyan discontent to serve his business interests in Trinity Bay while he, and Bemister, were condemned

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., April 6, 7, 10, 1854.

by the Courier for betraying the Wesleyan cause.<sup>54</sup> Little's Bill passed the Assembly with three Episcopallians, Parsons, Emerson and Hayward, having given strong support to it all through the session. Certainly it no longer could be considered a Roman Catholic question.

However, over the protest of O'Brien, the Legislative Council reduced the representation of Placentia-St. Mary's giving an additional member to Bonavista.<sup>55</sup> Slightly altering the divisional boundaries in Conception Bay they introduced a unique principle into the district of Burin. Attaching a proviso that Burinians were to have only one vote they, thereby, secured an equal return of Protestants and Catholics. No doubt it was a clever arrangement as that was the first scheme produced that guaranteed the returns of fifteen and fourteen for each side.<sup>56</sup> But if the Assembly accepted that plan it would mean, perhaps, giving up one seat and, therefore, less chance of success for the Liberal Party in gaining the majority needed to form the first Responsible Administration. In their frustration to pass a Representative Bill and acquire Responsible Government as quickly as possible the liberals met in party caucus and, over the objections of John Kent,<sup>59</sup> decided to accept the Placentia-St. Mary's amendment to prove to the British Government that "... there was no endeavour, as has been represented, to give a part of the denomination of Christians to which he

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<sup>54</sup>The Courier, March 18, April 15, 1854.

<sup>55</sup>Legislative Proceedings, Legislative Council, May 8, 9, 1854.

<sup>56</sup>Table X.

<sup>57</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, May 19, 1854.

TABLE X

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENTS TO THE  
REPRESENTATION BILL PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY  
APRIL 1854<sup>a</sup>

DISTRICTS	POPULATION.	PROTESTANT.	CATHOLIC	P	C
District of St. John's.....	25196	6210	18986		6
District of Trinity.....	8801	7518	1286	3	
District of Bonavista.....	7227	5418	1809	3	
District of Twillingate & Fogo.....	6744	5616	1128	2	
District of Ferryland.....	4581	182	4399		2
District of Placentia-St. Mary's...	6473	1018	5455		2
District of Burin.....	4358	2407	1951	1	
District of Fortune Bay.....	2920	2557	363	1	
District of LaPolle.....	2180	2151	29	1	
District of Conception Bay, 1st sub-division Horse Cove to Turk's Gut, Inclusive.....	3997	769	3230		2
2nd sub-division Brigus to Port de Grave, both Inclusive.....	5538	4150	1388	1	
3rd sub-division Bay Roberts to Harbour Grace, both Inclusive....	7981	5198	2783	2	
4th sub-division Carbonear and Musquito.....	5071	2340	2731		1
5th sub-division Fresh Water to Bay de St. Lawrence Inclusive.....	5439	3988	1451	1	
				15	14

<sup>a</sup>Journal of the Assembly, 1854, p. 188.



(Little) belonged, to grasp the government for themselves."<sup>58</sup> They based their opposition to the amendments, however, on the novelty of the Burin proviso and, deleting that section, they sent it back to the Council where, once again, the same Burin proviso was added. Rejecting it once again the Assembly endeavoured to seek some agreement with the Council failing which the Lower House adamantly refused to vote supplies and sent delegates to London to urge concession of Responsible Government on their own terms.<sup>59</sup>

Meanwhile, Hugh Hoyles had carried his resistance to Responsible Government to broader fields. Shortly after the concession of that boon had been made public the Hoyles group in the Assembly began to organize sub-committees among the Protestants in the outports under the direction of a Central Committee in St. John's.<sup>60</sup> The object was to oppose the granting of Responsible Government on the basis that it was a Roman Catholic plot and dangerous to the interests of all Protestants. Fearing that the struggle, in the Assembly, had been lost the St. John's conservative merchants had seized upon the creation of a grass-roots, anti-Catholic campaign as the last forlorn hope to prevent power from slipping from their hands. Requesting the Queen to withhold Responsible Government the Central Protestant Committee circulated petitions in the outports to be signed by every male Protestant 'of the age of discretion'. Having collected the petitions by June 20,

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., June 7, 8, 1854.

<sup>60</sup> C.O. 194/143, ff. 253-262, Hamilton to Grey, received, July 8, 1854.

1854, the Committee resolved to send Hugh Hoyles, their chairman, as a delegate to England to urge their claims. Preparing a statement of the 'case' Hoyles urged the claims of the Protestants with eloquent understatement and exaggeration.<sup>61</sup> In evaluating the struggle for Responsible Government Hoyles represented it as purely and simply a 'religious question' with all the Protestants on one side and all the Catholics on the other. He conveniently forgot that three prominent co-religionists of his had fought for the Representation Bill which he charged tended to 'perpetuate Roman Catholic Ascendancy'. Pleading that the Protestants "should not be deprived of liberty" Hoyles begged that "... the majority should not be placed at the mercy of the ecclesiastical ruler of the minority...."<sup>62</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that Protestants had a majority, particularly in Conception Bay and Burin, yet the Catholics "... are always ready to resort to violence and intimidation..." and are thereby able to win a Protestant seat. By this admission Hoyles admitted that the problem was of another kind and, therefore, was jousting the wrong windmill by fighting the Representation Bill. Surely his efforts ought to have been directed to the cause of peaceful campaigns instead. On the other hand the petitions presented were found to contain such irregularities<sup>63</sup> that they could not be presented to the Queen unless sufficient explanation were given.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., encl., 'Case of the Protestant Inhabitants of Newfoundland against the Unconditional Concession of Responsible Government, as set forth in A Letter to the Rt. Hon. Sir George Grey, Secretary of State for the Colonies, from H.W. Hoyles, Member of the Assembly, Newfoundland', N.D.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., N.D.

<sup>63</sup> All signatures and X's were in the same handwriting.

<sup>64</sup> C.O. 124/143, f. 435, Post to Hoyles, August 12, 1854.

Receiving a partial, but not completely satisfactory reply, Peel presented the petitions to the Queen with some reluctance.<sup>65</sup>

In the meantime Governor Hamilton became more closely identified with the anti-Roman Catholic campaign for, while submitting Protestant petitions to the Colonial Office, he unreservedly championed their cause.<sup>66</sup> Condemning the Representation Bill passed by the Assembly he reiterated his arguments about Catholic Ascendancy and doubted whether a government could be carried on with a majority of one considering "the intolerance of control which characterized those by whom the Roman Catholic members are returned...."<sup>67</sup> By this time the Colonial Office had become convinced of Hamilton's inability to mediate the conflict and were seriously considering his removal.<sup>68</sup> However, they contented themselves, at present, with remaining aloof from the struggle and warned Hamilton that it should be the constant endeavour of the local government "... to mitigate those hostile feelings and to prevent merely political questions from being mixed up with religious disputes."<sup>69</sup> Meanwhile the Colonial Office was being plagued by Hoyles, on the one hand, and Little and Emerson, on the other. Neither delegation, however, received a considerably warm reception and were forced to travel back home to receive from the

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., f. 440, Hoyles to Peel, August 14, 1854, marginal notes by Peel.

<sup>66</sup> C.O. 194/141, f. 65, Hamilton to Newcastle, March 23, 1854.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., f. 137, Hamilton to Newcastle, June 14, 1854.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., marginal noted by Newcastle.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., f. 153, Newcastle to Hamilton, July 6, 1854.

Governor the results of their entreaties. That result was of little comfort to the Central Protestant Committee and its supporters for the Home Government had declared support of the Assembly's stand on Burin. In addition, Hamilton was ordered to use his good graces to bring the conflict to a resolution and not to expect any interference from Britain. The only measure Her Majesty's Government has in their power, Grey informed Hamilton, "is that of advising Her Majesty to remodel the Council in such a manner as to make it act harmoniously with the Assembly...."<sup>70</sup> For the Council, Hamilton and the Central Protestant Committee, there was little over which to exult. Their prayers had not been acceded to and the Governor now faced the prospect of striking the best possible bargain with the Assembly or face the alternative of a remodelled Council and a Representation Bill on the terms of the Liberal Party. For the liberals there was, therefore, much encouragement.

On October 10 a special session of the House convened and, with the urgency of forming the government, the liberals rushed their Representation Bill through three readings on the sixteenth. The Council, however, gave no indication that their backs were to the wall as they fought the Bill for two weeks finally reducing by one the representation of Bonavista, Placentia-St. Mary's and Burin.<sup>71</sup> The subtraction of a member from Burin was made on the reasoning that

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., ff. 155-164, Newcastle to Hamilton, August 1, 1854.

<sup>71</sup> Legislative Proceedings, Legislative Council, October 20, 24, 27-30, 1854.

with one representative there would be more certainty of a Protestant return. Reducing the representation of Placentia-St. Mary's and Bonavista would guarantee an even return of thirteen to thirteen with Burin holding the key and, with those arguments, the Council moved for a conference with the Assembly which was promptly rejected.

In the meantime, Governor Hamilton demonstrated no desire to act as the impartial mediator as he had been instructed to do. Early in October the Official members of the Council intimated their desire to follow Hamilton's instructions in case of a dispute between the two Houses arising again.<sup>72</sup> In spite of the fact that after October 16 it was clear that no agreement could be reached between the two bodies yet Hamilton remained aloof until November 9. On that date, under threat of a remodelled Council, the Official members were advised to accept the Assembly's Bill<sup>73</sup> and a new Representation Act became law.<sup>74</sup> The Liberals looked forward to the hustings and an early election.

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<sup>72</sup>C.O. 194/142, f. 33, Hamilton to Grey, October 3, 1854, encl., Archibald, Crowdy and Road to Hamilton, October 3.

<sup>73</sup>Legislative Proceedings, Legislative Council, November 9, 1854, speech of Colonial Secretary.

<sup>74</sup>Table XI.

TABLE XI

THE REPRESENTATION BILL PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND  
FINALLY ACCEPTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 9, 1854<sup>a</sup>

DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF 1845	POPULA- TION.	PRO- TEST- ANT.	CATHO- LIC.	MEMBERS		PROPORTION FOR EACH MEMBER	
				P	C		
St. John's district is divided into 2 districts, by a line running North from Beck's Cove to Broad Cove.....	25196	6210	18986		6	4199	*The relative numbers of these districts, as altered by the Council, stand as here stated. The population was more equally divided in the Bill as sent up by the Assembly.
District of Trinity.....	8801	7518	1286	3		2933	
District of Bonavista.....	7227	5418	1809	3			
District of Fortune Bay.....	2920	2557	363	1		2920	
District of LaPolle.....	2180	2151	29	1		2180	
District of Ferryland.....	4581	182	4399		2	2290	
District of Burin.....	4358	2407	1951	2		2179	
District of Placentia-St. Mary's Conception Bay is divided into 5 districts, to return 7 Members, for a population of 28,026, averaging 1 for every 4,000, viz:-.....	6473	1018	5455		3	2157	
Horse Cove to Turk's Gut, Incl Turk's Gut, exclusive to Port de Grave, inclusive.....	3997	769	3230		2	1998	
Port de Grave, exclusive to Harbour Grace, inclusive....	5538	4150	1388	1		5538 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Carbonear to Musquito, Incl...	7981	5198	2783	2		3990	
Fresh Water to Bay de Verds...	5071	2340	2731		1	5071	
Twillingate & Fogo, Incl.....	5439	3988	1451	1		5439	
	6744	5616	1128	2		3372	
	96506	49523	46983	16	14		

<sup>a</sup>Journal of the Assembly, 1854, p. 193.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ELECTION OF 1855

With the passing of the Representation Bill through the Council the Liberals rushed through a Supply Bill and made provision for the registration of voters in the new district of Burgeo-La Poile in eager anticipation of a General Election.<sup>1</sup> The Conservatives, however, had other plans, Amending the Supply Bill in the Legislative Council they sent it back to the Assembly minus the clause relative to registration of voters.<sup>2</sup> Rejecting the Council's amendments the Assembly endeavoured to suspend the Registration Act altogether but gradually became aware of a plot to postpone the elections until the spring. Confident of winning a majority the Liberals could taste the sweets of office and thereby desired an election as immediately as possible. But, because of the difficulty of winter transportation and communication, a December election was hardly a realistic possibility, especially in the Northern and Western Districts which could not be filled up until spring. As the latter were largely Protestant<sup>3</sup> and most of them in the Conservative camp, a December election would therefore shortchange the Conservative Party. That being the case

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<sup>1</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, November, 1854; a proviso to register voters in the new district of Burgeo-La Poile had been tacked to the Supply Bill by the Assembly, while, for other districts, that duty was postponed for one year.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., November 22, 1854.

<sup>3</sup> Table XI.



the Government would be determined by the results in the Southern, or Catholic districts, which becomes altogether of more significance when one realizes that respective party strength differed by only one or two seats.<sup>4</sup> Both the liberals and the conservatives realized this and knew it to be advantageous to the former. While the liberals, therefore, urged an early election their opponents, on the other hand, hoped, by deferring the elections until spring, not only to postpone the almost inevitable accession of a Liberal Government, but sought an advantage for the mercantile conservatives. The coming of spring signified preparations for the fishery and the advancement of supplies for the fishing season. The merchants would, therefore, have the opportunity to apply, to the utmost, the 'mercantile screw' and this would be of some assistance in helping them to win that extra seat in Conception Bay or Burin. However, the conservative campaign would have come to nought had it not been for the staunch support given by the Governor, Kerr B. Hamilton.

Hamilton, who, since his arrival, had shown little impartiality in dealing with the disputes which had come to his attention,<sup>5</sup> now had, like Bishop Mullock, descended fully to the level of a political party leader. Before the opening of the special session of the House he had come round holding the elections immediately after the passing of the Representation Bill<sup>6</sup> but by November 14 the Governor had changed his mind. What had occurred in the interim was that a

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Above, pp. 71-72, 81.

<sup>6</sup> C.O. 194/142, f. 24, Hamilton to Grey, September 19, 1854.



Representation Bill had been passed which he considered "... is not such a one as, in the estimation of the Protestants generally, secures to them that share in the representation to which they conceive themselves entitled."<sup>7</sup> Believing that the returns would be different "... from what they would be if the electors were left to exercise their free choice" Hamilton, apparently, had decided to postpone the elections until May, 1855.

Meanwhile, the liberals seemed to have detected what was in the political air and demanded that Hamilton close the session and hold the elections that fall.<sup>8</sup> Upon his response that the election could be held no sooner than May<sup>9</sup> the Assembly refused the granting of supplies and instituted proceedings for the removal of the Governor.<sup>10</sup> While his opponents prepared the case against him and delegated Philip Little to England to urge their claims<sup>11</sup> Hamilton was concerned with creating arguments in defense of his stand on the election issue, a defence which appeared somewhat muddled. Firstly considering that transportation difficulties rendered a fall election impossible<sup>12</sup> he next argued that a registration of voters should precede an election<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., f. 65, Hamilton to Grey, November 14, 1854.

<sup>8</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, November 22, 1854.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., November 24, 1854, Hamilton to Ambrose Shea and Philip Little, November 24.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., November 27, 1854; see also Gunn, pp. 138-139.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., November 29, 1854.

<sup>12</sup> C.O. 194/142, f. 82, Hamilton to Grey, November 23, 1854.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., f. 100, Hamilton to Grey, November 29, 1854.

while, in another correspondence, he fell back on his first stated position and succeeded in aligning himself completely behind the Tory arguments.<sup>14</sup> Lastly, Hamilton added an additional defence which, perhaps, best represents his position. If, he argued, in addition to the unjust Representation Bill, elections are held when the Protestants don't want them "... exasperation would have been occasioned which would increase, embitter and perpetuate existing local differences...."<sup>15</sup> Hamilton was determined to salvage some measure of victory for his conservative friends. Behind this defence the Governor sent off Hugh Hoyles as his personal representative to counteract the accusations of Philip Little at the Colonial Office.<sup>16</sup> There, then, followed the cleverest political move of the whole conflict as Hamilton dissolved the Assembly.<sup>17</sup> Little was left suspended in London as the delegate from an Assembly which did not exist. Nevertheless, that must have been cold comfort for Hamilton who, although upheld on the election issue,<sup>18</sup> later received word of his dismissal.<sup>19</sup> To some extent the liberal leader had been successful and he returned to Newfoundland to find several of his colleagues already on the campaign trail in the most important election, to that date, in the Colony's history.

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, f. 167, Hamilton to Grey, November 30, 1854.

<sup>17</sup> Journal of the Assembly, St. John's, 1854, p. 138; the Assembly was dissolved on December 5, 1854.

<sup>18</sup> Gunn, p. 139.

<sup>19</sup> C.O. 154/144, f. 38, Grey to Hamilton, March 16, 1855.

In the interim the Catholic Party had been very busily engaged in settling election matters in the Catholic ridings. That project had been very effectively taken care of by Bishop Mullock and his Priests. Even then the magnitude of the problem taxed, to the utmost, the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church for the combatants were playing for big stakes - the control of the government of the Colony. The spoils of office, to those who had been outsiders, appeared tantalizingly great with the more precious of them being Assembly seats, especially those for Catholic ridings. With absolute Catholic majorities in six districts electing fourteen members<sup>20</sup> the Catholic Party had only to worry about unity in their ranks and prevent the rush of 'hungry expectants' into the field. Strong direction and wise leadership would be required as those fourteen must be solidly in the Catholic camp considering that only one district, Burin, was expected to decide the contest. There was no doubt, however, that Philip Little would require the assistance of the Bishop for, although he had proven himself an eminent politician, yet Little lacked those leadership qualities necessary to command obedience from the rank and file of his party. His eligibility as leader stemmed from other sources<sup>21</sup> while his efforts on the Representation bill and Responsible Government had failed to arouse the populace, or even the House of Assembly, until Bishop Mullock had made public his support of those issues.<sup>22</sup> The lack of impressive leadership in Little's personality

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<sup>20</sup>Table XI.

<sup>21</sup>Above, pp. 31-32.

<sup>22</sup>Above, pp. 37-41, 44-45.

was, perhaps, best demonstrated by the fact that he was almost defeated as Vice-President of the Benevolent Irish Society barely three months before the election. He won, instead, by only one vote and would have been beaten had Edward Morris, the other nominee, voted for himself.<sup>23</sup> That kind of lacklustre performance was much less than was required to distribute the six St. John's seats among a large Roman Catholic population many of whom would have political aspirations. However, the campaign started very slowly for, mainly out of courtesy to the absent Little, few liberals wished to impose themselves on the constituency before he returned.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, John Kent could not restrain his impatience and forthwith addressed the electors of St. John's East.<sup>25</sup> The address of R.J. Parsons quickly followed.<sup>26</sup> The campaign now gathered momentum as Edward Morris, who had been waiting in the wings for some time, issued his address to the electors of St. John's West.<sup>27</sup> Cashier of the Savings Bank, personal friend of the Bishop and first cousin of John Kent, Morris had many of the qualifications necessary to represent St. John's for the Catholic Party. Moreover, there existed a family tradition on which Morris could stake his claim to a share in representation. his

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<sup>23</sup> Edward Morris, *Diaries and Journals*, February 17, 1855.

<sup>24</sup> Little was in England, as a delegate from the Assembly, seeking removal of Governor Hamilton; see also above, p. 87.

<sup>25</sup> The Courier, February 10, 1855.

<sup>26</sup> The Patriot, February 19, 1855.

<sup>27</sup> Morris, February 20, 1855.



made to Kent and O'Brien, who had done nothing about it, Morris confessed his doubts that a Committee could "... secure his object from the materials at hand - of a batch of politicians every one of whom was at war, or in contention with, the other." Contention, of course, was inevitable in the Liberal Party in view of the fact that the latter had existed, for so many years, as an organization allied to the Church while religion remained, perhaps, the only basic unifying factor. In confessing the inability of the liberal politicians to reach agreement on the subject Morris had, by inference, suggested that the Bishop make the choices. Presumably, while still in the good graces of Mullock, Morris departed to let things take their course.

Three days later Morris and Robert Kent, brother of John Kent, learned indirectly of a meeting of liberals called by John Little, brother of the liberal leader.<sup>32</sup> Forthwith they repaired to the expected meeting place, the Legislative Library, only to find that the place of meeting had been moved to the next room, to which they entered uninvited. There they found, besides John Little, John Kent, George Emerson,<sup>33</sup> Peter Winsor,<sup>34</sup> T. Glen,<sup>35</sup> E.D. Shea, A. Shea, G. Hogsett,<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., February 23, 1855.

<sup>33</sup> George Emerson was the incumbent member for Twillingate-Fogo.

<sup>34</sup> Peter Winsor was the incumbent member for Ferryland.

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Glen was a Presbyterian, St. John's, merchant who had represented Ferryland in the Amalgamated Legislature.

<sup>36</sup> George Hogset was a Roman Catholic lawyer later chosen to represent Placentia-St. Mary's.

William Talbot<sup>37</sup> and James Tobin.<sup>38</sup> After having passed a resolution affirming the desirability of unity in the Party, Hogsett moved a resolution that the meeting decide on the St. John's candidates and read out the names of Little, Kent, Parsons, Shea, Winsor and Parsons.<sup>39</sup> Immediately Morris protested that such "... a one-sided meeting composed alone of the persons interested in the nomination!" should assume the right to dictate to the district. He was supported by the Kent brothers, Irish ex-patriates like himself, but received the argument in reply that the course had been decided by the Bishops and the Priests. Failing in his efforts to modify the plans Morris determinedly called a public meeting for the following night and addressed "... seventy or eighty notes to shopkeepers requesting their attendance...."<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile Father Condon notified Morris that he had changed his mind about the propriety of Morris' candidacy and that, as the nominations came from the Bishop, they ought to be respected.<sup>41</sup> At the same time Father Walsh informed the Kent brothers not to blame Hogsett or Little for what had happened at the meeting for they had been ordered to take the course they did and if they refused others would be found to do it.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>William Talbot was Assembly Reporter and later chosen to represent Harbour Main.

<sup>38</sup>James Tobin was a Placentia merchant who had represented that district in Amalgamated Legislature.

<sup>39</sup>Although Parsons may have been considered for the two ridings yet Morris must have made a mistake for John Fox, Roman Catholic, St. John's merchant was the other liberal candidate for St. John's.

<sup>40</sup>Morris, February 23, 1855.

<sup>41</sup>ibid.

<sup>42</sup>ibid., February 24, 1855.

Consulting with the Kents before the meeting Morris decided to retire "... rather than act in opposition to the wish of the Priests...."<sup>43</sup> Heard by only a very small audience Morris explained his purpose for withdrawing after which the original resolution, respecting the nominations, was carried unanimously. Those candidates, subsequently, carried the St. John's seats by acclamation because, apparently, the Priests had decreed it. Morris noted, sarcastically, that "... so triumphed the popular cause and the voice of the constituency." However he accepted his defeat in a resigned manner and went to a friend's house where, as he described in his diary, "... I stayed ... laughing over my misfortunes and disappointments for half an hour and washing down their recollection in a glass of brandy and water."<sup>44</sup>

Although the dispute had been peaceably settled the candidacy of Morris had represented, for the liberals, the greatest danger to party unity. Having considered the opposition of the Priests and Bishop as sufficient cause for his withdrawing Morris typified the Irish Catholic conservative elements that had found such favor with Bishop Fleming.<sup>45</sup> While the latter had considered that support of the Bishop constituted eligibility for political favor under his command, yet Bishop Mullock, on the other hand, had enough political sagacity to realize the suicidal results of division. When, therefore, the conflict

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Above, pp. 7-10.



at the Election Committee meeting demonstrated that the Morris camp was aligned against a basically non-Irish and native group<sup>46</sup> Bishop Mullock did not lack the capability to accept the latter while realizing, perhaps, that the former, in their devotion to the Church, could accept clerical decisions with greater resignation. In this, his ability to compromise, rested, perhaps, the source of a great deal of his influence while his power, therefore, remained supreme at this time. For the Liberal Party the necessity of retaining his support became that much greater for if Mullock tended to dispense his favors, towards clericals of the Morris variety the 'liberal' elements in the Party could not be so easily consoled.

For the remaining Catholic districts candidates were chosen, apparently, in much the same manner as those for St. John's, and when their names became public and received the approval of the clique in St. John's, unanimity prevailed.<sup>47</sup> All the Catholic districts were uncontested and fourteen Catholic Party representatives were elected by acclamation. "How cool!" commented the Protestant Times, "that men can be named and their return secured before going through the necessary ordeal."<sup>48</sup>

While, behind the scenes, the Roman Catholic Church played a big role in settling political affairs in the Catholic districts yet the Catholic Newfoundlander attempted to play down the influence of

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<sup>46</sup>Of the fourteen persons attending that meeting only four, Morris, the two Kents and Talbot, were Irish immigrants.

<sup>47</sup>The Patriot, March 12, 1855; The Courier, May 9, 1855.

<sup>48</sup>The Times, February 28, 1855.

religion in the campaign. Having built up a tradition of wariness to Bishop-directed politics<sup>49</sup> The Newfoundlander was, perhaps, acutely aware of the dangers of the liberal alliance with the Catholic Church and, therefore, attempted to camouflage the leading role played by the latter organization. Basing its campaign on an anti-mercantile platform The Newfoundlander depicted the conflict as a middle class-upper class struggle with the former championing the cause of the fishermen against the latter.<sup>50</sup> In the supplying system it saw the roots of all the Colony's social evils while the merchants became millionaires and the growth of an independent middle class was retarded. However, while the liberals undoubtedly received their leadership from the St. John's middle class, yet several prominent merchants were Party members while, in the opposite camp, eight of the fourteen conservative candidates did not belong to the mercantile upper class.<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless, when the Public Ledger and Newfoundland Express felt constrained to respond to the attacks on the mercantile community<sup>52</sup> the Newfoundlander could rejoice for it had forced those Protestant journals to defend the supplying system and the merchants. That could not fail to help the Liberal Party whose candidate, George Emerson in Twillingate-Fogo, stood to be defeated by a religious campaign on either side.

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<sup>49</sup>Above, pp. 33-34.

<sup>50</sup>The Newfoundlander, February 21, March 29, 1855.

<sup>51</sup>Those statistics came from various sources, principally newspapers, proceedings of Assembly and Council and Newfoundland Almanacs.

<sup>52</sup>The Public Ledger, January 26, February 2, 1855; The Newfoundland Express, February 20, 1855.

Nevertheless, the religious cry did overshadow everything else in the largely Protestant ridings and perhaps the greatest indication of the defensive attitude of the merchants' party was that 'Protestant Union' was adopted as their main campaign slogan.<sup>53</sup>

Having lost the 1852 election the conservatives had realized the harm of a Liberal-Roman Catholic-Wesleyan alliance and it was partly in recognition of this fact that they had since hastened to champion the Protestant cause in the fight over the Representation Bills.<sup>54</sup>

Having succeeded in making the issue one of religion the conservatives had forced a Representation Bill to be framed on denominational lines admitting a majority of one member to be justly due the Protestants. Now realizing that the only majority they could win was a Protestant one they did not hesitate to cast the campaign as a purely religious struggle against Roman Catholic ascendancy. The intensity of the religious conflicts had become so bitter through the Representation struggle of 1854 that the appellations 'Liberal' and 'Conservative' had been dispensed with altogether in favor of the denominational connotations, Catholic and Protestant. At this point the Protestant Party campaign was being directed by the Central Protestant Committee of St. John's,<sup>55</sup> of which Hugh Hoyles was the chairman.<sup>56</sup> That

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The Newfoundland Express, March 17, 20, 1855; The Public Ledger, March 13, 16, February 23, 1855.

<sup>54</sup>Above, pp. 66-68, 76-77, 79-81.

<sup>55</sup>The Courler, April 25, 1855.

<sup>56</sup>Above, p. 80.

Committee chose the candidates for the several Protestant districts and experienced the luxury of an uncontested campaign in all but three of their districts. Of those three the Catholic Party directly supported only one candidate, the incumbent George Emerson, in the district of Twillingate-Fogo. In that largely Anglican district, however, the electors preferred the conservatives, Ellis and Knight, nominees of the Anglican, St. John's merchant, C.F. Bennett, over those of the St. John's Catholic Bishop. While three candidates, in Bonavista Bay, opposed the Central Protestant Committee nominees<sup>57</sup> yet they were not sponsored by the Catholic Party and only the Morning Courler gave them brief encouragement.<sup>58</sup> Winning those three districts as easily as they did the uncontested ridings of Port de Grave, Fortune Bay, Burgeo-LaPoile and Trinity Bay the Protestant Party secured the return of twelve members.

Twelve seats, however, in a thirty-member House, was not enough to form a government and the two ridings of Harbour Grace and Burin were needed to give conservatives the victory. However, as liberals had, since 1850, been seeking Wesleyan support, they now aimed at Burin to stop the conservative campaign. Burin district, then, became the new battleground and the Roman Catholic-Wesleyan alliance which had been of help in the 1852 election<sup>59</sup> now became of crucial importance.

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<sup>57</sup>They were those who, apparently, were disgruntled that they were not selected for the Conservative ticket; see The Courler, April 25, 1855.

<sup>58</sup>The Courler, April 28, 1855.

<sup>59</sup>Above, pp. 61-62.

Clement Benning, the Incumbent member, and Joseph Woods, the Courier editor, became the standard bearers for the Catholic Party in that district while Episcopalian injustice to Wesleyans was invoked to the utmost.<sup>60</sup> The Courier aimed its campaign directly at the Wesleyans recalling the long history of their exclusion from government patronage by the corrupt Anglican establishment. The education question was thoroughly reviewed to demonstrate how Bishop Field and his clergy had sought sub-division of the education grant in order to counteract Wesleyan Methodism in the Colony. The Courier was ably assisted in its appeal to the Wesleyans by the Patriot who encouraged that denomination to denounce "Episcopalian Ascendancy" and unite with their friends, the Roman Catholics.<sup>61</sup> The Public Ledger and Newfoundland Express were denounced by Patriot editor Parsons as "imposter prints" who never "... defended Wesleyan Methodism against the 'Iron heel' of 'prelatical' despotism."<sup>62</sup>

In the meantime the campaign for "Protestant Union" was being urged very strongly with the Ledger and Express seeking to exploit fear of Roman Catholic domination.<sup>63</sup> That appeal, of course, aimed directly at Burin, had for its object the breaking of the Roman Catholic-Wesleyan alliance. They continually attacked Joseph Woods as a servant

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<sup>60</sup>The Courier, February 24, March 3, 17, 24, 28, May 9, 1855.

<sup>61</sup>The Patriot, January 29, March 12, 19, 26, April 30, 1855.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., March 19, 1855.

<sup>63</sup>The Public Ledger, February 13, 23, March 13, 16, 1855;  
The Newfoundland Express, March 1, 3, 10, 17, 1855.

of Catholic interests who was being used by Bishop Mullock as a tool to win Burin district. In their opinion the aim of the Roman Catholic Church was to sow dissension in the ranks of the Protestants in order to take control of the government.<sup>64</sup> If that happened, they argued, civil liberty would be at an end and all government patronage would go to Catholics. Protestants must therefore unite and save the Colony from the evil dictatorship of Bishop Mullock. That campaign, however, had very little success as the Protestant Party found difficulty in acquiring the services of prominent names to contest the district. What chagrined them most of all was that the influential Wesleyan merchant, J.J. Rogerson, campaigned for the Liberals in St. John's and supported the Roman Catholic-Wesleyan alliance in Burin.<sup>65</sup> Liberal exploitation of Wesleyan-Anglican rivalries had proven too strong, therefore, for the conservatives in Burin and while, apparently, they intended to concede the district, yet the Anglican clergymen at Burin had devised a clever scheme to preserve, at least, a partial victory. Convincing a Roman Catholic Buriner, Patrick Morris, to announce his candidacy, at the last moment, Rev. Gathercole had succeeded in dividing the Catholic vote and, while the Catholic Benning topped the poll, Morris defeated the Wesleyan candidate by a mere eight votes.<sup>66</sup> Although it is difficult to discover the conditions under which Morris put himself in nomination yet his subsequent support of the Liberal Party<sup>67</sup> did not

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<sup>64</sup>The Newfoundland Express, March 17, 1855.

<sup>65</sup>The Public Ledger, May 25, June 19, 1855.

<sup>66</sup>The Courter, May 12, 1855.

<sup>67</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, May 29, 1855.

betray the fact that the Liberal-Wesleyan alliance, in Burin, had been damaged by the refusal of some Catholics to vote for Woods. The conservatives, therefore, had been served new ammunition with which to attack the Liberal-Wesleyan alliance and their success would depend on what use they could make of it in succeeding elections.

However, the Burin victory gave the Liberals a working majority while Harbour Grace gave them an extra two by acclamation. The incumbent member, John Hayward, had been joined by a former representative from Conception Bay, James L. Prendergast.<sup>68</sup> The latter, a former Independent, was now a full fledged supporter of liberal policy while Hayward of the Anglican faith and supported by the local merchants, had been a liberal follower since the 1852 election.<sup>69</sup> The combination of the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant merchants in that district had proven too strong for the Protestant Party while the St. John's merchants could also ascribe their defeat, perhaps, to the fact that they lacked a prominent foothold in Harbour Grace. The addition of those two seats gave the Catholic Party a strong majority of eighteen to twelve and shortly afterwards Governor Darling requested Philip Little to form the first Responsible Government.

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<sup>68</sup>The Public Ledger, May 28, 1855.

<sup>69</sup>Above, pp. 62, 65.



## CHAPTER V

### RELIGION IN POLITICS, 1855-1860

In May, 1855, as a result of a successful general election, there devolved upon Philip Little, as Premier-elect, the task of forming a new government that had been rescued from the hands of the Anglican Church and the St. John's mercantile class. Little had the opportunity of fulfilling, for the Roman Catholics, their claim to a long-awaited share in the fruits of political patronage while at the same time he would need to demonstrate the legitimacy of their boast of liberalism by according a fair denominational return to all. While the announcement of his Executive Council<sup>1</sup> revealed that the first objective had been realized yet serious doubts still remained about Catholic ascendancy. Whereas, according to population, a fair religious distribution would have been either a three-to three Roman Catholic-Protestant relationship or a four to two division in favour of the latter group, yet the Premier had reserved four positions for his co-religionists. In addition, one of the two Protestants, Thomas Glen,<sup>2</sup> had been returned for a Catholic district, Ferryland, while the other, George Emerson, had been rejected by the Anglican constituency of Twillingate-Fogo.<sup>3</sup> The new government, then, was a government of the

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<sup>1</sup>Table XII.

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix IID.

<sup>3</sup>Above, Chapter IV, p. 98.

TABLE XII

THE COMPOSITION OF THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCILS, 1855-1860  
SHOWING DENOMINATIONAL AND RESIDENTIAL AFFILIATIONS<sup>a</sup>

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL				LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL			
Members	Rel.	Appt'd	Residence	Members	Rel.	Appt'd	Residence
P.F. Little	R.C.	1855	St. John's	L. O'Brien	R.C.	1855	St. John's
J. Kent	R.C.	1855	St. John's	J. Tobin	R.C.	1855	St. John's
L. O'Brien	R.C.	1855	St. John's	J. Rockford	R.C.	1855	St. John's
E. Hanrahan	R.C.	1855	Carbonear	G.H. Emerson	C.E.	1855	St. John's
T. Glen	Pres.	1855	St. John's	J. Munn	C.E.	1855	Hr. Grace
G.H. Emerson	C.E.	1855	St. John's	T.H. Ridley	C.E.	1855	Hr. Grace
				S. Carson	Pres.	1855	St. John's
J.J. Rogerson	Wes.	1857	St. John's	T. Row	C.E.	1855	St. John's
E.D. Shea	R.C.	1858	St. John's	J.J. Rogerson	Wes.	1855	St. John's
G.J. Hogsett	R.C.	1858	St. John's	J. Furlong	R.C.	1855	St. John's
J. Hayward	C.E.	1858	Hr. Grace	P. Duggan	R.C.	1855	St. John's
				J. Cormack	R.C.	1855	St. John's
				J. Fox	R.C.	1857	St. John's
				E. Morris	R.C.	1858	St. John's
				N. Stabb	Pres.	1858	St. John's
				R.J. Pinsent	C.E.	1859	Hr. Grace
				P. Kough	R.C.	1860	St. John's
				J. Hogsett	R.C.	1860	St. John's
				R. Kent	R.C.	1860	St. John's

<sup>a</sup>Those statistics have been compiled from various sources, mainly Newfoundland Blue Books 1855-1860, also newspapers, directories, Newfoundland Almanacs, Governor's Despatches and Assembly speeches.

Roman Catholic districts and while the newly arrived Governor Darling felt that Protestant representation had destroyed at least one ground of party distinction<sup>4</sup> yet the Tory press exhibited no such optimism. Claiming that the government had fallen completely into the hands of a Catholic minority the Public Ledger urged that complaints be laid at the foot of the throne<sup>5</sup> while the Express rejected any suggestion that misnamed 'Liberal Protestants', Glen and Emerson, had any claim to represent the Protestant electors of the Colony.<sup>6</sup> However, the composition of the Legislative Council seemed to portray a fairer distribution where twelve seats had been divided evenly between Catholics and Protestants.<sup>7</sup> Even there a considerable struggle had ensued over its constitution when the Tories demanded that the Governor appoint a strong minority to represent the views of the opposition. Moving an amendment to the Address-in-Reply which, in part, expressed to the Governor the hope that "... you will not, by permitting yourself to be governed in this selection by the advice of your ministry for the time being, adopt a course at once unconstitutional, unprecedented and unjust...." Hoyles declared it sufficient to make the Upper House harmonize with the Assembly.<sup>8</sup> Although Carter explained they wished, only, that the

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<sup>4</sup>C.O. 134/15. ff. 131-147, Darling to Russell, May 29, 1855.

<sup>5</sup>The Public Ledger, May 25, 1855.

<sup>6</sup>The Newfoundland Express, June 5, 1855.

<sup>7</sup>Table XII, above, p. 103.

<sup>8</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, May 29, 1855.

Governor appoint their representatives<sup>9</sup> the Government Party interpreted the motion as a denial of the very basis of Responsible Government - the duty of the Governor to follow the advice of his ministers.<sup>10</sup> They, therefore, defeated the motion on a strict Party vote. Nevertheless, Governor Darling worked out a compromise with the Premier by which Munn, Ridley, Row and Samuel Carson were accepted to represent the opposition while the government party retained complete freedom with respect to the remaining appointments.<sup>11</sup> It is only when one remembers that six of those eight appointments went to Roman Catholics that one realizes that the denominational picture in the Legislative Council was just as bad, or even worse, than that of the Executive Council. While many Protestants would be tempted, therefore, to read there proof of Catholic ascendancy yet the peculiar composition of the Councils had demonstrated the problems of according Protestant representation in a Party and Government depending for their existence on the votes of Catholic constituents. The denominational character of the Government reflected the weaknesses in the Liberal Party - weaknesses which the Party would need to overcome if they were to retain the support of the Protestant districts of Burin and Harbour Grace. In those circumstances it must be pointed out that only one Wesleyan had received a Council appointment in spite of the fact that liberals had fought Anglican ascendancy for the sake of justice to both Wesleyans and Catholics. In addition, the election of two Catholics in Burin, plus

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> C.O. 194/144, ff. 218-236, Darling to Russell, May 29, 1855.

Catholic failure to vote for the Wesleyan, Woods, was a harm that could not be repaired with the appointment of one St. John's Wesleyan, J.J. Rogerson. Catholic power in the Liberal Party was, therefore, too clearly revealed in the political appointments while that greed would need to be moderated if political justice were to be accorded the Wesleyans.

Those appointments not only revealed the strongly Roman Catholic character of the Liberal Party, but accurately reflected its geographical base. While only the liberal members for Harbour Grace, Carbonear and Burin lived outside St. John's, at the same time, five out of six Executive Councillors and ten out of twelve Legislative Councillors were natives of the capital.<sup>12</sup> The Government was not only Catholic, then, but a St. John's government also, a feature which became accentuated as a result of the administrative policy of the Little Government. Taking office at a period when Colonial finances were not in sound condition<sup>13</sup> the Liberal Government faced heavy criticism from the Opposition for inauguration of a Reciprocity Treaty with the United States - a measure which the conservatives believed would greatly decrease the revenue.<sup>14</sup> The Little ministry, however, attempted to solve that problem by increasing duties on luxuries and manufactured articles while reducing duties on raw materials to encourage local manufacturing.<sup>15</sup> In addition, the Government inaugurated a program

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<sup>12</sup>Table XII, above, p. 103.

<sup>13</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, August 1, 1855.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., May 30, 1855.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1855.

of administrative reorganization for greater efficiency in the collection and expenditure of the revenue. The old offices of Colonial Treasurer and Collectorship of Customs were combined in the person of the Receiver General (Cap. VI), while the latter became chairman of a new Board of Revenue (Cap. IV) created to superintend the working and practical operations and effects of the Revenue system. In addition, a new Board of Works (Cap. VII) was created with responsibility for the superintendency and management of all public buildings, public property and public works throughout the Colony. There then followed a general reduction in the salaries of the principal officers of the government (Cap. VIII). Undoubtedly the combination of offices could lead to a check on expenditures, but what had happened, in the process, was a greater centralization of government in the capital. This did not escape the Opposition who, quite correctly, labelled the new administrative policy, especially the Board of Works, as a denial of patronage to the outports and accentuation of the rule of St. John's.<sup>16</sup> Indications had therefore been given that opposition could, perhaps, be expected from the outports.

Nevertheless, by July, 1858, when Philip Little retired due to ill health, the Liberal leader could look back on a rather eventful three years during which a fairly successful record of legislation had been compiled.<sup>17</sup> With the Upper house having been harmonized with the Lower House the Council-Assembly struggle, which had characterized

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., July 13, 1855.

<sup>17</sup> Gunn, pp. 142-143.

the pre-Responsible Government days, had disappeared while the government's legislative program generated little political excitement. The conservatives, perhaps because of the fact that Little had a firm majority in both Houses, remained a very tame opposition. They centred their attacks on wastage of government money and on government partiality in distribution of road grants and poor relief. The latter funds, they charged, were being distributed in unfair proportions between St. John's and the outports while government, more specifically, Roman Catholic districts were being favored over and above opposition, Protestant districts.<sup>18</sup> Debates on the road bills and supply bills witnessed each member fighting for his own district's share of those monies. However, there was little difficulty encountered in passing the legislation or in winding up each session's business. For most of those sessions the Opposition did not bother to present the usual non-confidence motions in the Throne Speech debate. A political crisis loomed, however, in 1857, when Britain announced the signing of a new Fishery Convention with France conceding to the latter country rights detrimental to the Colony of Newfoundland.<sup>19</sup> The Opposition charged duplicity on the part of the government but the necessity of unity, in the face of the external threat, brought unanimity in condemnation of the Convention forcing it to fall to the ground.<sup>20</sup> When Philip Little retired, therefore, in 1858, he could look back on three years of relatively calm and stable politics. Contributing to that situation

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<sup>18</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, November 18, 1856; March 14, 1857; March 28, 1859.

<sup>19</sup>Gunn, pp. 43-45.

<sup>20</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, February 18, 19, 1857, The Newfoundlander, February 19, 24, 1857; The Public Ledger, February 12, 27, 1857.



be to keep the Party united while, at the same time, preventing the loss of Protestant support which had been gained under the efforts of its former leader. If the new Premier could moderate the demands of the pro-clerical, Irish, St. John's element there was every possibility that he could lead the outport-oriented, pro-native, and possibly anti-clerical, wing of the Party. That, however, proved to be his especial problem for the St. John's by-election, called to fill Little's vacant seat, revealed Kent, right at the beginning of his term as leader, unable to placate those forces.

In a campaign that witnessed Joseph Little, brother of the ex-Premier, supported by Kent and Bishop Mullock,<sup>24</sup> the strongly pro-native element marshalled their resources and came out in great strength. Backing J.J. Geran, a vigorous and Independent Catholic, St. John's native, they waged an energetic campaign to the consternation of Joseph Little. While the pro-native Patriot championed that cause its editor, R.J. Parsons, dropped his pen and took to the hustings for Geran in a campaign that was actually a repudiation of the leadership of John Kent.<sup>25</sup> Public demonstrations of support for Geran convinced Little to withdraw and the natives had won a clear victory.<sup>26</sup> Although the ex-Prince Edward Islander, Little, might have been acceptable eight years earlier, as his brother Philip had been, Kent had not realized that times had changed and that maturing Newfoundlanders were inclined

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<sup>24</sup>The Newfoundland Express, July 31, 1858.

<sup>25</sup>The Patriot, November 8, 1858.

<sup>26</sup>The Telegraph, November 3, 1858; The Morning Courier, November 6, 1858.

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<sup>24</sup>The Newfoundland Express, July 31, 1858.

<sup>25</sup>The Patriot, November 8, 1858.

<sup>26</sup>The Telegraph, November 3, 1858; The Morning Courier, November 6, 1858.

to accept nothing less than a true-blue native. Undoubtedly that experience should have been a warning that Kent would need to loosen his ties with the Irish and pro-Church element. Instead he seems to have chosen the opposite course and, by his political appointments, loosened, rather, his ties with the Protestant community. In the eighteen months following the retirement of Little, Kent made a total of nine new appointments to his Executive and Legislative Councils<sup>27</sup> reserving six for his co-religionists. One of those six was his cousin, Edward Morris, while another was his brother, Robert Kent. Those two, along with the present Premier, had formed the core of opposition to the Liberal ticket in 1855 and had it not been for the tenacity and ability of the compromising Bishop to make sacrifices for the good cause, those three Irish ex-patriates might have turned the reform campaign into an Irish Catholic movement.<sup>28</sup> Now they had worked their way into the inner circles of government and the situation of 1855 had been reversed. The Liberal Government was in danger of becoming identified with government by the Roman Catholic Church.

Kent's induction into the Office of Premier proved to be a rather critical experience for him. Hardly had the St. John's by-election been concluded when a political crisis arose over alleged violations of French fishing rights in Newfoundland. Complaints had been received from residents of St. George's Bay that French fishermen had encroached on the rights of Newfoundland planters.<sup>29</sup> While the

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<sup>27</sup>Table XII, above, p. 103.

<sup>28</sup>Above, pp. 92-94.

<sup>29</sup>The Newfoundland Express, September 11, 1858.

Government waited for more information on the subject R.J. Parsons, liberal for St. John's East, demanded the calling of the Assembly and denounced the delay as 'criminal' apathy on the part of the Kent government.<sup>30</sup> A few days later the Newfoundland Express reprinted an article from the Globe's Paris Correspondent which accused both the Kent government and Bishop Mullock of duplicity in the French crimes and accused Mullock of siding with the French.<sup>31</sup> Hinting that James Tobin, Kent's financial secretary and advocate of extreme 'Newfoundland rights' against France, was the author of the article, the Conservative Express gladly accepted it as evidence of a conspiracy between two Catholic governments. Feeling that a possible lack of vigilance, by the Government, in preservation of Newfoundland's fishery rights was an issue by which they might hurt the Liberal Party the Opposition rose to the attack.<sup>32</sup> Whether Tobin wrote the article, or not, was a matter of doubt, yet, as requested by Bishop Mullock, the Newfoundlander refuted the allegations and specifically named Tobin as the author.<sup>33</sup> Supported by the Courier and Patriot Tobin denied he had ever made the charges<sup>34</sup> and vowed to Bishop Mullock that "Your Lordship's authority to the Editor of the Newfoundlander, serving as his protection, deprives me of

Patriot, December 6, 1858.

<sup>31</sup>The Newfoundland Express, December 7, 1858.

<sup>32</sup>Gunn, p. 151.

<sup>33</sup>The Newfoundlander, December 9, 1858.

<sup>34</sup>The Morning Courier, December 11, 1858; The Patriot, December 27, 1858.

the right of legal redress in the state of affairs here."<sup>35</sup> Meaning that in St. John's where a jury would at least contain a majority of Roman Catholics he could not expect a verdict against the Bishop. Tobin was supported by all the Protestant papers. Seizing upon that statement, however, as a base imputation on the administration of justice, Kent removed Tobin from his position of financial secretary and ejected him from his Legislative Council seat.<sup>36</sup> Assailed from within and without the Liberal Party the Kent Government, however, extricated itself from the political crisis by making it solely an issue of allegiance to the Catholic Bishop by members of his flock. Presiding over a mass meeting of Roman Catholics, in front of the Bishop's Palace, Kent forwarded resolutions of honour and respect for Bishop Mullock while lines of condemnation were heaped on Tobin.<sup>37</sup> Mullock, himself, addressed the assembled congregation and remarked on the great display of loyalty which proclaimed, he said, the indissoluble attachment between the people and their pastor. What had begun as an attack upon the government, then, had concluded with a defense of the Roman Catholic Church. Apparently Kent's interpretations of the political crisis had revealed his inability to separate Church and State. For them they seemed one and the same thing. The success of the native, anti-Mullock candidate, J.J. Geran, had been followed, therefore, by the sacrifice of another native, anti-clerical, James

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<sup>35</sup>The Times, December 11, 1858.

<sup>36</sup>Minute of Council, December 17, 1858; The Times, December 18, 1858.

<sup>37</sup>The Newfoundlander, December 16, 1858; The Patriot, December 20, 1858.

Tobin. With these forces unreconciled the election year of 1859 would prove to be rather an eventful one for John Kent and the Liberal Party.

Although, in 1859, Kent's Party had been able to repeat Little's victories of 1855<sup>38</sup> it was not without the experience of serious dissensions which almost split the Party wide open. In contrast to the 1855 election, when Mullock had restrained the Kents and Edward Morris for the sake of unity in the face of the grand prize of self-government,<sup>39</sup> St. John's, in 1859, became a real political battlefield. Seven candidates took to the hustings in St. John's West<sup>40</sup> in spite of the warnings of the suicidal results of division in the party. The three incumbent Liberals, Ambrose Shea, John Casey and J.J. Geran, sought re-election but the temptation of place and pay, plus the partially unacceptable leadership of Kent, tempted four others to claim election as Liberal candidates. When the 'hole-in-corner' meeting convened to decide the Liberal ticket John Kent found himself, as Liberal leader and Premier, in a much more influential position than that of 1855. J.J. Geran, the native, was rejected in favor of an Irish-expatriate, T.S. Jwyer, while the new ticket received the sanction of the Bishop.<sup>41</sup> Geran, however, lacked the resignation of Edward Morris and, instead of 'laughing it off', he coalesced with the fiercely Independent native, Henry Renouf, and the Irish, Thomas Talbot, to

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<sup>38</sup> See Appendix II, E.

<sup>39</sup> Above, pp. 92-94.

<sup>40</sup> The Newfoundlander, May 16, 23, September 12, October 3, 10, 13, 31, 1859; The Patriot, May 30, October 3, 1859.

<sup>41</sup> The Patriot, October 13, 31, 1859.



fight the 'chosen three' from poll to poll until the day of voting.<sup>42</sup> Although failing to win the district Geran came close to dislodging Dwyer while the strong vote polled by the three Independents<sup>43</sup> demonstrated definite limits to Mullock's influence. The Kent group had scored a partial victory in getting a seat for the Irishman, Dwyer, but it might very well turn out to be a pyrrhic one for it was the native element that had suffered. In the outport, Catholic districts natives won the day as Harbour Main switched from two Irishmen of 1855 to two natives.<sup>44</sup> In Placentia-St. Mary's a native, Joseph English, defeated one of the Irish incumbents, Michael Kelly, while the Irishman, Delaney, was successfully returned. However, he was in 1860, rewarded by Kent with the position of Postmaster General. For his vacant seat the government supported Michael Kelly who was, once again, defeated by another native, Richard McGrath.<sup>45</sup> Not only were the Irishmen losing out in the external ridings, but a definite trend had set in against St. John's. In 1859 Harbour Main had rejected two St. John's candidates in favour of Patrick Nowlan and Charles Furey, residents of the district while by 1860 Placentia-St. Mary's had replaced two of its three St. John's members with Placentia natives, English and McGrath. John Kent's problems of leadership had become magnified to the extent that, not only was he now required to reconcile natives and Irish ex-patriates,

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<sup>42</sup>The Times, September 17, October 19, 26, 1859; The Public Ledger, November 11, 1859.

<sup>43</sup>The Newfoundlander, November 10, 1859.

<sup>44</sup>The Morning Courier, November 5, 1859.

<sup>45</sup>The Newfoundland Express, November 11, 1860.



he would have to lead a combination of outport residents and St. John's natives.

Meanwhile, Burin was almost lost to the Government. In that district, where Liberals had predicted their victories on a continuation of Wesleyan-Anglican antipathies, the gradually increasing Roman Catholic orientation of the Liberal Party, since 1855, had begun to alienate Wesleyans. A less than illustrious beginning had been made in Burin where, apparently, Catholics had placed religion ahead of politics and voted for two Catholics, the Liberal, Benning, and the Tory, Morris.<sup>46</sup> Seizing on that result as an opportunity to weaken the Liberal-Wesleyan alliance the 'Protestant Union' advocates had painted the Burin election as a conspiracy on the part of the Roman Catholic Priests who had duped Woods never intending, in the first place, that he be elected.<sup>47</sup> However, the Liberal government had the opportunity, once in charge of the patronage, to rectify any Wesleyan grievance by according to that sect their just share of the government rewards. Yet, the Liberal Party had not been able to restrain its 'liberalism' towards the Catholic Church and, in order to undo years of political injustices to Catholics, had been incapable of moderating the greed of Catholic power.<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately an Anglican government had been exchanged for a Roman Catholic one, neither of which could be acceptable to Wesleyans. Even in Bay de Verde and Burin

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<sup>46</sup> Above, Pp. 100-101.

<sup>47</sup> The Public Ledger, May 25, 1855; The Newfoundland Express, June 5, 1855.

<sup>48</sup> Above, Pp. 102-105.

districts government patronage had gone to Roman Catholics. In the former district, where there was an overwhelming majority of Wesleyans, the Catholic priest had been appointed Chairman of the Road Board and immediately had engaged his brother as Road Inspector.<sup>49</sup> In the latter district six appointments had been made in the Civil Service from 1855-1859, all six going to Roman Catholics.<sup>50</sup> While some excuses could be made for the Catholic appointments in Burin, yet in Bay de Verde, little could be read into the appointments except the monopolizing tendencies of Catholics. On those issues, from 1855 to 1860, the Opposition centred much of its attention maintaining their campaign of 'Protestant Union' and deprecating the manifestations of Catholic Ascendancy. Special appeals for amalgamation were made to the Wesleyans<sup>51</sup> while the Protestant papers promised that Churchmen could be fairer to Wesleyans than Roman Catholics.<sup>52</sup> That claim was bolstered by Anglican support of Wesleyans in the Northern districts. There, in 1855, the Wesleyan, Stephen March, had been elected for Trinity on the ticket with the Anglicans, Winter and Carter, while in Twillingate-Fogo the Anglican, Emerson, had been rejected in favour of his co-religionist, Ellis, and the Wesleyan, Knight.<sup>53</sup> By 1859 the Tories were confident that 'Protestant Union' could be successful as they accepted Stephen Rendell, a Wesleyan merchant and agent of Job Brothers, for Trinity

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<sup>49</sup>The Public Ledger, September 30, 1856.

<sup>50</sup>The Newfoundland Express, July 19, 1859; The Times, July 20, 1859.

<sup>51</sup>The Public Ledger, September 9, 1859; The Newfoundland Express, July 5, 1859.

<sup>52</sup>The Newfoundland Express, July 23, 1859.

<sup>53</sup>Above, p. 98.

Bay moving March to Bonavista in order to elect three Wesleyans in the districts where Wesleyans had a substantial minority.<sup>54</sup> With Hoyles offering a reconciliation,<sup>55</sup> a general meeting of Wesleyans met in St. John's and resolved on complete Wesleyan-Episcopalian union.<sup>56</sup> The Roman Catholic-Wesleyan alliance seemed not to exist for in the general body of Wesleyans there seemed to be little support. However, institutional support was behind the Liberals as the Methodist Church favored the alliance<sup>57</sup> while Wesleyan benefits were dispensed in that direction. Their newspaper, The Courier, was maintained by government patronage in the printing of the Assembly debates, while in 1858, the Liberal government incorporated a Wesleyan Methodist Conference for Newfoundland.<sup>58</sup> In the same year the Methodist Church was rewarded with a Wesleyan Academy under its own direction.<sup>59</sup> J.J. Rogerson, an Executive and Legislative Councillor, remained the chief Wesleyan spokesman and was closely identified with the Church. A member of the Conference and Director of the Wesleyan Academy, Rogerson was also President of the Religious Tract Society and Vice-President of the Bible Society.<sup>60</sup> When the Wesleyan meeting, which had resolved

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<sup>54</sup>The Times, October 5, 1859.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., July 20, 1859.

<sup>56</sup>The Newfoundland Express, July 5, 14, 1859.

<sup>57</sup>Above, p. 60; also the Newfoundland Express, November 12, 1859, June 8, 1860; the Public Ledger; January 20, 31, 1860; the Morning Courier, January 4, 1860.

<sup>58</sup>Legislative Acts, Newfoundland, 1858, Cap. 19.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., Cap. 8.

<sup>60</sup>The Public Ledger, September 20, 1859.

on union with Episcopallians, offered Rogerson the district of Burin he refused<sup>61</sup> and, instead, accepted Kent's persuasion to stand there for the Liberal Party. Resigning from the Legislative Council, Rogerson, with Ambrose Shea as his colleague, saved Burin by a very small majority of votes.<sup>62</sup> Wesleyans, then, were as little susceptible to Church influence as some Roman Catholics. What little Wesleyan support remained, however, was given a severe blow shortly afterwards when Kent re-filled Rogerson's Legislative Council seat, and two other vacancies, with three Roman Catholics.<sup>63</sup> Even the Courier was disgruntled and expressed its dissatisfaction at the situation.<sup>64</sup> The Liberal Party-Wesleyan alliance was, therefore, tottering by 1860. This situation had not only developed because of the Roman Catholic bias in political patronage but had been induced also because such association had, from the very first, been an 'Unholy Alliance'. The spectacle of the Liberal Party making a common cause out of Wesleyan and Catholic grievances had made strange bedfellows of the Conservative Church of Rome and the evangelical Methodists. In fact, what Wesleyans had found most repugnant in the Anglican Church was precisely the most outstanding characteristic of the Roman Catholic religion. Having retreated in the face of Tractarian ascendancy Wesleyans had sought solace in Roman Catholic support to prevent sub-division of the Protestant Education

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<sup>61</sup>The Newfoundland Express, August 23, 1859.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1859.

<sup>63</sup>Table XII, above, p. 103.

<sup>64</sup>The Morning Courier, January 18, 1860.

grant, a measure which they could not afford.<sup>65</sup> That 'marriage of convenience' was destined to last only as long as it benefited Wesleyans, or remained tolerable to them. Now, especially since Kent had become leader, as the Liberal Party gradually came to assume a more Roman Catholic complexion the alliance was destined to become embarrassing to Wesleyans. As the census of 1857 had, in addition to proving accurate, revealed strong Wesleyan population gains the Methodist Conference, by 1860, had come to accept sub-division of the Protestant Education grant and now favored Wesleyan schools.<sup>66</sup> The offer of fair denominational reward by Hugh Hoyles, plus their claim that Wesleyans could elect a total of four of their co-religionists in alliance with Anglicans, now stood out as extremely tempting to Wesleyan Liberals. If serious disunity resulted in the Government ranks it could easily lead to a defection of the remaining Wesleyan support. Unfortunately, for the government, a crisis, whose development had been underway since 1855, was soon to produce a collision between the various discordant elements in the Liberal Party.

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<sup>65</sup> Above, pp. 19-26.

<sup>66</sup> The Morning Courier, April 18, 1860.

## CHAPTER VI

### RUPTURES IN THE LIBERAL-CATHOLIC ALLIANCE

As the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the Liberal Party had gradually become more prominent throughout the 1850's, yet at the same time a new entity had been created that was to compete with that Church for the allegiance of its subjects. That entity was the new political establishment, the government, which had been called into being by, and depended on, the will of the people. In the years following 1855 there evolved a system of expenditure of public funds that was, by 1860, to bring the government into direct collision with the Roman Catholic Church.

The most remarkable characteristic of the government's spending program, in those early years of Responsible Government, was the unusually small porportion of funds that seemed to be dedicated to purely 'economic' purposes.<sup>1</sup> Of the five largest blocks of expenditures only those of education and road building could be said to serve economic needs to some extent. Only, indirectly, however, could education serve those purposes and while disputes, on that subject, had been common the conflict was more on the school system than on the methods of allocating or distributing monies. There remained, therefore, only the area of road building where opportunities existed for the

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<sup>1</sup>Table XIII, p. 122.

TABLE XIII

PRINCIPAL EXPENDITURES OF THE GOVERNMENT, 1855-1860<sup>a</sup>

Year	Total Expenditures <sup>b</sup>	Legislative Contingencies	Education	Poor Relief	Roads	Salaries
1855	98445 5 0	14420 6 8	7695 0 0	16083 11 9	3108 5 6	24078 4 2
1856	76275 13 4	5313 5 1	8027 10 0	11651 5 1	7587 16 8	20066 13 8
1857	85545 0 2	5000 0 0	8980 0 0	11730 0 0	10000 0 0	22946 0 0
1858	115005 1 8	6286 19 10	11029 19 0	10234 10 0	18166 15 2	16108 13 3
1859	114599 1 3	7015 15 5	13382 6 0	9684 2 4	17217 14 6	18797 10 0
1860	90728 17 2		13905 13 0	10592 5 6	13329 3 7	9865 0 0

<sup>a</sup>Those figures have been compiled from the Public Accounts which, for those years, were printed in the House of Assembly Journals.

<sup>b</sup>All monies given in pounds, shillings, and pence.



government to subject expenditures to solely economic needs. Undoubtedly there was a dire lack of roads in the Colony in 1855 but, in a country where fishing remained the only industry, the sea remained the chief highway of transportation. Little compulsion remained, then, for building roads at all while great leeway was allowed for subjecting such expenditures to purposes of a social or political nature. However, an argument could be made that road building would relieve the isolation forced upon the outports by the harsh winter frost while, at the same time, opening up the interior to provide incentives to farming. Nevertheless, a quite inauspicious beginning was made in this direction in 1855.

The Little administration began its reign, in the first Responsible House, with the problem of poor relief a very critical one for the government. With finances in such a state that a policy of retrenchment had to be inaugurated<sup>2</sup> the Liberal Government had to face exorbitant demands for poor relief coming from many parts of the Colony.<sup>3</sup> In an effort to remedy this problem Little had appointed, and subsequently accepted the report of, a Select Committee which had recommended that relief of the able-bodied poor be afforded by employment on the roads.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, the only area of public spending which could directly assist economic development had, thereby, been transformed into a social welfare project. With alleviation of distress becoming one of the main aims of spending, in this field, there existed strong tendencies that such funds could easily become subjected to political purposes. Aiding, also, to

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<sup>2</sup>Above, pp. 106-107.

<sup>3</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, May 22, August 1, 1855.

<sup>4</sup>Minute of Executive Council, September 1, 1855.

contribute to this development were the strong centralizing tendencies of the administration for, in recognition of the importance of public works spending, the government had created a new organization to manage and maintain all roads, made or to be made in Newfoundland. The new Board of Works,<sup>5</sup> taking over power and duties which had previously belonged to individual local road boards, was strenuously opposed by the Conservatives. They charged, with some justice, that the Board was given too many functions and duties to operate properly; that it would not be able to manage local affairs over such a large area from St. John's, and that the people in the outports could do it better.<sup>6</sup> In addition, Ellis and Carter, Opposition members, accused the government of depriving the outports of all share in the patronage and of centralizing it in St. John's. They had, therefore, isolated an extremely important factor and one consistent with Liberal Party tradition. For the centralization of government in St. John's paralleled the development of the Government Party - itself dominated by St. John's personnel. Government, apparently was becoming an instrument to serve the Party in power and with the passage of time this fact was clearly demonstrated.

To the new Board of Works the Executive Council gave responsibility for direction of all monies for employment of the poor, while a Council committee was created to process all applications.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Above, p. 107.

<sup>6</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, July 13, 1855.

<sup>7</sup>Minute of Executive Council, September 1, 1855.

Three St. John's natives sat on the Committee and worked in close alliance with the new Board appointed by the same Council. Their practice, apparently, seems to have been to distribute poor relief and road monies on a basis favourable to St. John's, while according a greater share to outport ridings favouring the government than to Opposition districts.<sup>8</sup>

Both those practices had been attacked by the Opposition who charged in 1856 that the outports were not getting their fair share of poor relief and that what they did receive went to a chosen few.<sup>9</sup> In 1857 the opponents of the government charged that road monies were being distributed in an unfair manner between Roman Catholic and Protestant districts and accused the government of sectarian discrimination.<sup>10</sup> By 1859, when John Kent had succeeded to the leadership, the government districts of Harbour Grace and Harbour Main had joined the Opposition in demanding higher appropriation for their constituencies.<sup>11</sup> By 1860 the Kent government proved unable to force their road appropriations through the House when Burin and Placentia districts joined the former dissatisfied members in demanding more money.<sup>12</sup> Only after the Government

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<sup>8</sup>Tables XIV and XV, pp. 126-127.

<sup>9</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 18, 1856.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., March 14, 1857; The Newfoundland Express, October 22, 1857.

<sup>11</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, March 28, 1859.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., April 11, 12, 23, 24, 1860.

TABLE XIV

DISTRIBUTION OF POOR RELIEF BY DISTRICT  
FOR SELECTED YEARS<sup>a</sup>

DISTRICTS	POPULATION TO NEAREST HALF THOUSAND	DISTRIBUTION OF POOR RELIEF IN POUNDS, SHILLINGS, AND PENCE FOR THE FOLLOWING YEARS								
		1856			1857			1858		
St. John's	25,000	5623	2	11	3681	1	6	4624	2	1
Harbour Grace	8,000	938	13	5	685	0	8	776	14	2
Carbonear	5,000	986	1	0	590	17	0	706	5	4
Port de Grave	5,500	566	16	11	235	8	0	283	3	5
Bonavista Bay	7,000	280	0	10	311	19	8	304	10	8
Twillingate-										
Fogo	7,000	334	12	9	300	6	0	238	0	10
Burin	4,000	171	4	2	160	13	6	325	13	3
Ferryland	4,500	277	5	0	174	3	8	258	17	0
Bay de Verde	5,500	209	10	1	152	6	2	138	7	9
Piacentia-										
St. Mary's	6,500	267	14	6	258	7	10	327	19	6
Harbour Main	4,000	88	5	6	74	5	0	174	3	7
Trinity Bay	9,000	461	1	3	312	14	2	471	10	2
Fortune Bay	3,000	20	8	0	2	0	0	12	0	0
Burgeo-LaPoile	2,000				5	0	0	10	0	0

<sup>a</sup>Those figures have been taken from the Public Accounts, in the House of Assembly Journals, where breakdowns are given only for the years 1856-1858; the figures for 1860 were presented to the House of Assembly by the Colonial Secretary, December 13, 1860 and include relief monies expended to December 12 of that year.

TABLE XV

DISTRIBUTION OF ROAD MONIES FOR SELECTED YEARS<sup>a</sup>

DISTRICTS	POPULATION TO NEAREST THOUSAND	APPROXIMATE TOTALS IN POUNDS FOR THE FOLLOW- ING YEARS <sup>b</sup>		
		1856	1858	1860
St. John's	25,000	1713 <sup>c</sup>	5349	2266
Government Districts (excluding St. John's)	32,000	4873	9025	3808
Opposition Districts	39,000	1693	4037	3389

<sup>a</sup>Those figures have been compiled from Journal of the House of Assembly, 1857, Appendix, pp. 94<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> - 126; also, *ibid.*, 1859, Appendix, pp. 189-212, 231-232; also, *ibid.*, 1860-61, Appendix, pp. 133-134.

<sup>b</sup>Those figures seem more discrepant when compared with the geographical extent of the respective areas; see map, Appendix I.

<sup>c</sup>The figures for the St. John's districts include funds expended on St. John's streets and drains in addition to those on roads and bridges.

scale of appropriations had twice failed did John Kent, in an effort to pacify his supporters and obtain a Road Bill, promise to temporarily abandon the vote for the encouragement of local steam communication so as to settle the squabbling which had characterized the supply debates for many days.<sup>13</sup> The vote which had been heretofore planned for local steam was added to the road appropriations in order to rase the outport share of road monies.

Meanwhile, the government members met the assault on poor relief distribution by assuring the Opposition that abuses were being checked in a number of ways. Relief was being denied to the able-bodied poor without labour in return and, the government declared, applications were being processed carefully with the requirement that they be signed by either a magistrate or clergyman.<sup>14</sup> However, the few records which are available on dispensation of poor relief belie that statement for in 1857 and 1858 district representatives, especially government supporters, had acquired a share in distributing those funds.<sup>15</sup> Apparently, as a by-product of distribution of monies for social ends and as a result of a highly centralized administration, a system had spontaneously arisen whereby district representatives had usurped some of the functions of the Executive Council. That situation had developed to the extent that, by 1861, the government members for Harbour Main, Nowlan and Furey, accused each other, in the Assembly, of tending to

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., April 23, 1860.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., January 15, 1856.

<sup>15</sup> Journal of the Assembly, 1859, Appendix, pp. 151-152; also, Ibid., 1858, Appendix, pp. 400-418.

monopolize the poor funds for that district.<sup>16</sup> In the meantime the leadership of John Kent had been so unimpressive in the two sessions under his government that party discipline had almost entirely vanished. Assembly sessions of 1859 and 1860 were as much marked by dissensions among Government supporters as between Government and Opposition. In the debates of 1860 Kent had proven incapable of moderating the demands of outport representatives or of mediating the disputes between the Liberal members. Instead he stood helplessly by while the beneficiary measure of outport steam communication was sacrificed to the greed of district representatives.<sup>17</sup> As the subversion of government expenditures to political ends tended to increase the influence of the district representatives, particularly government supporters, at the same time their ingratulating themselves with the electors tended to diminish the need for dependence on an artificial prop-like religion while the people came to recognize a new force that brought practical results. This development foreshadowed momentous consequences for the Catholic Church who wished to see no diminution in its influence over its flock. Bishop Mullock was fully aware of the situation when he complained to the Government in 1860 in respect to poor relief distribution that "... the influence that a pastor should exercise in his own parish has been nefariously interfered with."<sup>18</sup> Mullock's discontent with the manner of government spending came to a head after the session of 1860

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<sup>16</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, January 28, 1861.

<sup>17</sup> Above, p. 128.

<sup>18</sup> Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, January 23, 1860, Mullock to Attorney-General, December 23, quoted by John Kent.



had sacrificed a measure for which he had long fought - that of outport steam communication. Returning in June from a bumpy road trip which had exhausted his patience,<sup>19</sup> Mullock took pen in hand and, in characteristic passionate extremism, issued a scathing denunciation of the Liberal Government.<sup>20</sup>

After having remarked on the advantages of steam communication with the outports Mullock, addressing himself "to the Catholic People of the Diocese of St. John's,"<sup>21</sup> proceeded to denounce the Government for their failure to provide adequate means to that object. "How does it happen," he demanded in exasperation, "that an enormous revenue, wasted in providing useless places for state paupers, cannot afford the small sum of £ 3000 a year for outport accomodation?" Too much corruption he believed to be the fault for "... a few years of political subserviency must be rewarded by a useless place with a good salary...." Characterizing the collection of the revenue under such a system as "legalized robbery" he repudiated "... any connection with a party who take care of themselves but do nothing for the people...." The whole government was not, however, condemned as "a few officials" were blamed who "... for selfish reasons, oppose all progress, all improvement, which does not create new situations for themselves or their retainers...."

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<sup>19</sup> John T. Mullock, *Diaries and Journals*, June 4, 1860, pp. 20-21.

<sup>20</sup> The Patriot, June 4, 1860, Mullock to the Catholic People of the Diocese of St. John's, June 4.

<sup>21</sup> The Diocese of St. John's, at that time, included all the Catholic districts except Carbonear.

Threatening an election if things were not improved Mullock, by attacking a Party whose strength had depended so much on his influence, placed the Government in an embarrassing position. Their subsequent performance would now be judged against the publicly stated position of the Bishop, while the latter's views had been cast in such definitive terms that compromise, on the part of the Premier, would become much more difficult. Perhaps Mullock's greatest error, however, was his failure to confide those opinions in a private despatch while the Bishop, realizing too late that he had been guilty of a rash decision, tried unsuccessfully to recover his letter before it appeared in the public prints.<sup>22</sup>

Needless to say the publication of such an epistle threw the Liberal Party into consternation<sup>23</sup> but who greeted the Bishop's outburst, nonetheless, with almost complete silence. As for the 'few officials' they remained quiet for the time being while the Opposition press gleefully published and re-published Mullock's letter. Witnessing to the truthfulness of the Bishop's publication they charged duplicity on the part of Mullock in the crimes of the Liberal Government for they believed it would have foundered before had it nothing but public opinion on which to rest.<sup>24</sup> They then expressed contentment to await developments in the Liberal Party before conjecturing on the results. They had not long to wait for 1860 had witnessed such a poor fishery that demands for

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<sup>22</sup>Edward B. Foren, "Right Reverend Doctor Mullock, Bishop Militant," Centenary Souvenir Book, ed. Fr. P.J. Kennedy (St. John's: Robinson and Company Limited, 1955), p. 245.

<sup>23</sup>The Patriot, June 11, 1860.

<sup>24</sup>The Public Ledger, June 5, 1860; The Newfoundland Express, June 7, 1860.

relief became so enormous that the House of Assembly was required to meet in emergency session early in December. It must have been a perplexing situation for John Kent who, in the front of Mullock's denunciation, had his choices narrowed to but two alternatives in an effort to save his government. On the one hand he could reject, completely, the interference of Bishop Mullock, an alternative rendered extremely difficult both because of Kent's past relationships with the Church and the political necessity of retaining government support from a Party based on Catholic constituencies. On the other hand he could align himself completely behind the Bishop and, in the event of party defections, dissolve the House to fight an election on the issue of clean government. Trouble was, however, that a Catholic campaign would alienate the Protestant support necessary to maintain his Party in office. Events were soon to prove, however, that Kent had been unable to accept the former alternative.

On December 12, 1860, the Liberal Premier gave notice of moving the House into Committee of the Whole on the state of the Colony to consider the following resolution on relief of distress: "That the Executive be authorized to expend such amounts as may from time to time be shown to be necessary, for this object, in anticipation of the annual grant which this House will in due course place at their disposal." In a speech paralleling Mullock's views Kent condemned the present system of poor relief distribution and orated on the necessity of meeting the demands with greater economy and justice than had theretofore been the case.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless he drew back from detailing,

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<sup>25</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, December 13, 1860.

specifically, how that was to be accomplished while the Opposition refused to sanction any monies without the production of such a program.<sup>26</sup> They demanded estimates from the government so that each district would get its fair share - a just demand in view of previous district allotments but a ruse cleverly designed to draw the Liberal dissidents from their lair, particularly the 'few officials' who had been verbally assassinated by Mullock. Nevertheless, Kent's resolutions passed on a strict party vote and the House recessed for the Christmas season. In the interval the government published new regulations by which to control distribution of relief funds,<sup>27</sup> the most striking innovation of which was exclusive control of disbursements by a Committee of Council on receipt only of applications signed by either magistrates or clergymen. Denying any control over poor relief to the district members the new rules would inevitably create opposition from within, and without, the Liberal Party. When the House reconvened, therefore, in January, 1861, John Kent was faced with a rebellion in government ranks.

On January 23 Patrick Nowlan, one of the members for Harbour Main, moved the House into Committee of the Whole to consider a resolution expressing displeasure with the new rules and declaring that "... In the absence of any well-defined system of Poor Relief, ... any regulations made on the subject ... should not ignore the just influences of the Representatives of the people, who are the constitutional and responsible guardians of the public welfare." He was joined by the

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> The Patriot, January 28, 1861.

Placentia members, English and McGrath, Barron of St. John's, while behind the scenes the Speaker, Ambrose Shea, was believed to be the person who pulled the strings.<sup>28</sup> While the Opposition sat gleefully silent waiting for the breakup of the government the 'maverick' liberals who had, apparently, made their case in party caucus, were treated to a torrent of abuse from John Kent who painfully regretted that "... a tyro in legislation was making himself the tool of certain interested parties to turn him from power."<sup>29</sup> Elaborating on the necessity for reform in poor relief distribution he condemned the previous system and declared he "... would not, any longer, allow the public monies to be made use of by honourable members to be squandered for electioneering purposes, and for popularizing themselves with their constituents at the expense of the people of the country." Quoting a letter from Bishop Mullock in defense of the new regulations he, along with Hogsett and Furey, charged Howlan with attempting to monopolize the supervision and control of Harbour Main poor relief and of interfering with the just influences of the Parish Priest. During the three day debate on Howlan's resolutions little was accomplished as, from time to time, complete bedlam and disorder broke out on the floor of the house with the gallery spectators joining in the melee. Most of the unseemly happenings occurred because of the in-fighting in the government ranks as the Liberal Party went through the painful process of adjusting themselves to the probable disengagement from office. However, on January 28 Kent announced that the differences had been resolved and an

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<sup>28</sup>Mullock, 1864, N.D., N.P.

<sup>29</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, January 23, 1861.

agreement reached whereby district members were to have the same powers as clergymen or magistrates in the administration of poor relief. Nowlan and Barron rejoiced that the government had completely fallen in with their views.<sup>30</sup> The anti-clerical, pro-district members' influence had prevailed while the pro-clerical, Kentish faction had, in order to retain power, been forced to come to terms with the Liberal dissidents. Kent apparently believed that even a bad government under his leadership was still superior to any available alternatives. However, an uneasy alliance now kept the Liberal Party together and, while those factions continued to squabble in the Assembly, public opinion doubted that it could long continue. If Kent, however, wished to maintain his government, which had served less than half of its four year mandate, he would need to continue truckling to the anti-clerical faction and patch up the dissensions out of public view. As fate would have it an entirely new set of circumstances was created which led to dissolution of the Assembly and the projection of Liberal squabbling into the public arena.

On February 6, 1861, the Receiver-General introduced a Bill for the conversion of Colonial accounts from British sterling to Newfoundland currency. In particular the Bill provided for the payment of all government salaries at the reduced rate of 4s.4d. to the dollar,<sup>31</sup> a rate to which the Assistant Judges had previously objected.<sup>32</sup> In the Assembly, therefore, the Conservatives championed the Judges' case while

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, January 28, 1861.

<sup>31</sup> The Patriot, February 11, 1861.

<sup>32</sup> Gunn, pp. 158-159.

Hoyles charged that the object of the Bill was to deny, to the Judges, their claim for which the latter had petitioned the Governor in protest.<sup>33</sup> On hearing, for the first time, of this course of action the impetuous Kent labelled the Judges' behaviour as "secret plottings and conspiracies" and, in view of the fact that Bannerman had refused to sanction the Currency Bill without a suspending clause, the Premier regretted "... that the contemptible means resorted to by these Judges should have operated so powerfully upon his Excellency the Governor."<sup>34</sup> Considering that the foregoing accusation would, if true, render him "... unfit to represent the Crown ..." Bannerman dismissed Kent's ministry when the Liberal leader failed to supply a satisfactory explanation of the charge.<sup>35</sup> Hugh Hoyles, upon request, formed a new Conservative government and met the House on March 4. There the Hoyles government faced an aggrieved Liberal Party who bitterly assailed the new ministry while defending their right to office on the unconstitutional conduct of a Governor who refused the advice of his Responsible ministers. Moving want of confidence in the new government Kent led his followers in a repudication of the Hoyles government.<sup>36</sup> The Assembly was subsequently dissolved while Premier Hoyles set down new elections for the month of May.

... the Liberal press charging Bannerman with treason for usurping the rights of the people by entrusting his government to a minority in the House<sup>37</sup> the Governor, doubtlessly, stood on weak ground.

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<sup>33</sup>Legislative Proceedings, House of Assembly, February 25, 1861.

<sup>34</sup>ibid.

<sup>35</sup>ibid., March 4, 1860, Bannerman to Kent, February 28.

<sup>36</sup>ibid., March 5, 1861.

<sup>37</sup>The Patriot, March 11, 1861.

If the rejection of his ministry by an Assembly majority of sixteen to twelve could not be reversed in the country Bannerman would maintain an unenviable position. His behaviour, however, instead of being impulsive stemmed from his strongly held philosophy of Responsible Government. The latter system he believed "... instead of lessening, increases a Governor's responsibility." "But I would not, for a day," he had once written, "continue to administer the government of a colony unless I had the power to dispense with the services of my ministers and appeal to the country."<sup>38</sup> Bannerman had a glorified idea of a Governor's power under the Responsible system but evidence also indicates that, because of dissensions in Liberal ranks and corruption in the Government, he had had, for some months, resolved to get rid of Kent's ministry at the earliest opportunity.<sup>39</sup> The assumption of power by the Conservatives, therefore, had been an event which the Opposition press had expected for some time.<sup>40</sup>

In the meantime the unseemly behaviour of the Liberal Government supporters, particularly on the poor relief issue, had prompted the Anglican Bishop, Edward Field, "... in the cause of religion and righteousness ..." to declare his sentiments towards the government "or want of government" in Newfoundland. Condemning the factious struggles taking place in the House of Assembly, particularly among

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<sup>38</sup>Pedley, pp. 439-440, Bannerman to a friend, N.D.

<sup>39</sup>Gunn, p. 158.

<sup>40</sup>The Telegraph, March 6, 1861.



government supporters, Field concluded that Responsible Government was a "cruel infliction" on the Colony. "Poverty," declared Field, "makes strange bedfellows and upon that theory, it seems, we may account for members of a government who despise and abuse one another, holding and acting together, which otherwise, in men of honor and principle, would be unaccountable."<sup>41</sup> The remedy, he declared, in a further letter after Kent had been dismissed, was to mitigate the evils of self-government by electing men of talent and independence. Then, in an obvious reference to the Conservatives he urged all voters to elect persons who are "... upright, honest and consistent; men of talent and experience who have a stake in the country...."<sup>42</sup>

The general tendencies of Field's pronouncements was to further confuse religious prejudices with the continuing political struggles. In stark contrast to their silence which greeted Mullock's condemnation of the Kent government the Catholic Liberals now joined in political and religious warfare against Field. Led by the Newfoundlander,<sup>43</sup> the Patriot<sup>44</sup> and John Kent<sup>45</sup> the arguments of Bishop Field were rejected, repudiated and analyzed to the point of oblivion. Culminating the assault the Bishop was vilified, slandered and verbally assassinated.

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., February 13, 1861, Field to the Editor, February 9.

<sup>42</sup>The Public Ledger, April 19, 1861, Field to the Editor, April 6.

<sup>43</sup>The Newfoundlander, February 14, 1861.

<sup>44</sup>The Patriot, February 18, 1861.

<sup>45</sup>The Newfoundlander, February 14, 1861, Kent to the Editor, February 14.

In the meantime the shock of the Opposition having suddenly captured power in a minority House while Bishop Field, in one of his rare epistles denounced the Liberals, unnerved Mullock to the extent that he launched a new harangue evaluating the conflict in terms of a Protestant conspiracy against Roman Catholics.<sup>46</sup> "Divide and conquer," he warned his flock, 'has always been the rule of your enemies, by this they have succeeded in enslaving you, by this they hope to do so again - to enslave you and your children. Your civil and religious liberty are concerned, your schools, your colleges, everything which you value as Catholics for it is a melancholy fact which history will not allow us to contradict, that wherever Protestants get undivided power, they invariably used it in old times, and even now, where they can, as in the Northern Countries of Europe, for the enslavement of the Catholic people and the destruction of their religious establishments; and 'tis only when Catholics get too strong in any country that legal persecution was changed into a social one, and exclusion from power and office substituted for fine and imprisonment. Be divided and you will be what you were forty years ago...." Having irrationally imputed to the Protestants motives for such a base intrigue Mullock then proceeded to chant the praises of 'the only perfectly independent body in the country' - the Catholic Clergy. Roman Catholics must listen to the Priests, he urged, for "... they have no interest to subserve; it matters nothing to them individually who rules at Government House or presides at the Council Board; they dread not the frown of the merchant;

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., March 25, 1861, Mullock to the Editor, March 25.

they know with what money he trades and their anxiety is for the anxiety of their own parishioners, and not for his foreign creditors; they depend not for their maintenance on foreign funds or foreign societies...." Exaggerating the importance of his clergy Mullock declared them to be the only benefactors of the people. "The only monuments of art, piety, education or charity in the country (except the little done by other denominations) are the work of the Catholic Clergy, and in great measure raised at their own expense.... Who have pushed on every public improvement," he demanded oratorically, "roads, steam, telegraph, education, amidst the opposition of the old regime, the apathy of the many, the dishonesty of some, and the misguided ignorance of the uneducated, more to be pitied than blamed? - the Catholic Clergy, the fathers and founders of the civilization of Newfoundland. Take away the Catholic establishments for religion and education from St. John's and the outports and what will remain?" Only one advice, then, did he have for Roman Catholics "... that they take the advice of their only disinterested friends - the Catholic clergy - who I hope will be united in recommending the best among the individuals who will offer themselves to the electors. Catholic Electors!" he declared, "If you reject this advice you will deservedly be the tools of unprincipled schemers, and the slaves of a ruthless faction who have always, when they could, crushed you and hope by dividing you to do so again." In such a manner did the Catholic Bishop support a return to power of the Liberal Party while discounting the idea that the late Opposition had anything to offer in the way of public improvements. The spectacle of Bishop Mullock now publicly supporting a Party of which,

less than ten months previously, he had condemned as 'legalized robbers' was enough to considerably damage his credibility even among members of his own flock. However, what was most unfortunate, was that His Grace had cast the political campaign wholly in terms of a Protestant-Catholic religious struggle in which he urged the necessity of Catholic unity to foil Protestant machinations. Undoubtedly the Bishop had little hesitation in urging an anti-Protestant campaign for, with the realization that Catholics were divided, that remained, perhaps, the only means by which he could possibly unite his flock. Nevertheless by this turn of events Mullock had turned the clock back to the time of Bishop Fleming and had attempted to inaugurate a campaign in which Catholicism would battle Protestantism. Quite correctly the Times pointed out that 'Protestants' included Wesleyans too<sup>47</sup> while the Liberal, Wesleyan Courier found Mullock's statements quite 'objectionable'<sup>48</sup> and therefore played little part in the election campaign. For the Wesleyans the incantations of the Catholic Bishop must have been the last straw for J.J. Rogerson refused to contest Burin while Hoyles, and a Wesleyan, Evans, took it by acclamation.<sup>49</sup> In the other Protestant, Liberal-held district of Harbour Grace, the only one in which Protestants were required to face a contest, the pro-clerical, Bishop-supported Prendergast was opposed by the Conservative convert, Hayward, and a newcomer, R.T. Moore. Severe election riots broke out when Prendergast's supporters attacked their opponents and, joined by

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<sup>47</sup>The Times, March 27, 1861.

<sup>48</sup>The Morning Courier, March 27, 1861.

<sup>49</sup>The Newfoundlander, May 6, 1861.

Roman Catholics from Carbonsar, they defeated the Harbour Grace Protestants and took possession of the town.<sup>50</sup> Numbering more than one thousand they roamed the streets reaking havoc and damage on Protestant mercantile establishments. Meanwhile one hundred troops were despatched from St. John's while the Hoyles Government declared the contest null and void. The results of the two Protestant districts, while enough to retain Hoyles in power, had reduced the Liberals to fourteen seats but their greatest setbacks were to come as a result of conflicts within their own ranks.

In St. John's Pierce Barron, who had been one of the 'mavericks' on the poor relief question, separated from his colleagues, Casey and Dwyer, to run his own campaign.<sup>51</sup> The appearance of the Independent native Renouf, and the Irish Talbot, on the hustings, gave reason for expecting serious division but the publication of Mullock's plea for unity in the cause of Catholicism, generally speaking, awakened a good response from his St. John's flock. That, perhaps, was dictated, in part, by the fact that division in the Catholic ranks had paralleled also the outport-St. John's rivalry<sup>52</sup> and while, in the former, serious opposition was to occur, yet in the latter, there was relatively little division. Renouf, therefore, withdrew his opposition to the ticket in exchange for the Bishop's support<sup>53</sup> while Dwyer withdrew in favour of his

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<sup>50</sup> Minute of Executive Council, April 30, 1861, T.H. Ridley to Governor Bannerman, April 27.

<sup>51</sup> The Newfoundlander, March 14, 1861.

<sup>52</sup> Above, pp. 133-134.

<sup>53</sup> The Newfoundlander, April 11, 1861.

fellow countryman, Talbot.<sup>54</sup> Only Barron was left outside the fold and, finding little demonstration of support in that time of crisis, he withdrew on nomination day.<sup>55</sup> While Ferryland and Carbonear returned Kent's candidates, Placentia-St. Mary's and Harbour Main were not so docile. In the former district the maverick, McGrath, coalesced with another Placentia native, W.G. Flood, and joined by Ambrose Shea, another Liberal dissident, won an easy contest. In Harbour Main, however, the scene of Nowlan's revolt, the forces of reaction made a determined stand by attempting to defeat Nowlan, and his colleague Thomas Byrne, with Priest-supported candidates. Joined by a former Placentia member, George Hogsett, Charles Furey's campaign was managed by the Parish Priests in the district who directed their efforts towards their flock at Sunday masses.<sup>56</sup> Nowlan and Byrne, however, had strong and consistent support so that their opponents in Salmon Cove were afraid to repair to their usual polling places of Cat's Cove,<sup>57</sup> a stronghold of Nowlan supporters. On hearing of intimidation against the fifty Salmon Cove voters Father Walsh organized, from the Sunday Altar, a body of two hundred and fifty Harbour Main men to accompany them to their place of voting. At 5:00 a.m., therefore, on

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<sup>54</sup>The *Provincialist*, April 3, 1861.

<sup>55</sup>Barron, however, could not be contained, as he was returned for Placentia-St. Mary's, in December 1861, to fill a vacancy that had been caused by the premature death of W.G. Flood who had been elected in May.

<sup>56</sup>For details surrounding the Harbour Main election see *Journal of the Assembly 1861*, Appendix, pp. 51-124, Evidence Taken before the Select Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Contested Election at Harbour Main.

<sup>57</sup>Cat's Cove, hereinafter called Conception Harbour, was the former name for the latter.



the day of polling, approximately three hundred men marched on Conception Harbour and found the population, armed with stones and sealing guns, encamped above the barricaded entrance to the village. Determined to prevent the entrance of the Harbour Main people they, in consultation with Father Walsh, agreed only to permit Salmon Cove voters to enter the town. When the Priest signalled advance, presumably, to the fifty voters the whole mob moved en masse whereby the Nowlan supporters commenced firing. One man was killed and ten others wounded forcing the Priest's party to retreat to Harbour Main where the Returning Officer was forced to receive the votes of those who should have polled at Conception Harbour. He then signed a certificate, written by Hogsett, certifying the return of the Priest's candidates. Later in the day, however, he wrote the government saying he had returned Hogsett and Furey from threats on his life. Two days later troops arrived in Harbour Main to keep the peace and arrest the offenders. Addressing Returning Officer Strapp the Troop Commander gave him fifteen minutes to reconsider the returns which had been made on the fourth. With the troops marching in the street Patrick Strapp nervously paced the room while Father Walsh urged no retreat. Eventually Strapp decided to make no return to the writ for which his home, stores and stage, six buildings in all, were completely razed to the ground by the supporters of Father Walsh. Meanwhile the Executive Council, because of the ambiguous nature of the writs, refused to gazette any return for Harbour Main<sup>58</sup> and, when the new Assembly opened on May 13, Hogsett and Furey came to claim their seats for which they were promptly ejected from the House. Speaking to the thousands of people who had milled around the

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<sup>58</sup>Minute of Executive Council, May 10, 1861.

Assembly building Hogsett incited them to riotous fever which led to their attacking mercantile establishments on Water Street.<sup>59</sup> The troops, after having been called out, were attacked and beaten leading to the discharge of a volley of gunfire into the midst of the mob killing three people and wounding others. At that instant the bells of the Catholic Basilica summoned the flock to the presence of Bishop Mullock who counselled peace to salve their wounded feelings. Subsequently an Assembly Committee, having been appointed to hear evidence on the Harbour Main election, ruled, on June 25, that Nowlan and Byrne had been duly elected. With the Placentia members they joined a beaten Liberal Party whose rump was badly disunited. With the Hoyles Government firmly in power the eclipse of the Liberals had demonstrated the folly of their alliance with the Roman Catholic Church and their tendency to allow the latter body to direct the reform movement into paths of religious extremism. In addition the policy of amalgamation adopted by the Hoyles Government, now proven more legitimate by a Roman Catholic appointment to the Legislative Council, demonstrated an earnest attempt to end political alignment based on religious affiliation. With Roman Catholics seriously divided Mullock's Church was in no position to advocate a different policy. On the other hand, the Conservative leader had fully recognized the significance of division in the Catholic camp and, by offering a fair denominational reward to that sect, had struck at the basic weakness in the Liberal Party - the irrational presumption

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<sup>59</sup>The Patriot, May 20, 1861; The Telegraph, May 15, 22, 1861.



of the Mullock-Kent group to represent all Catholics in politics. While Mullock's attempt to form a political group on the basis of Catholic unity had failed the Conservative efforts at reconciliation had laid the framework for development of new political alignments transcending religious boundaries.

## CONCLUSION

The movement for reforms of the constitution, which developed slowly after 1850, had been impeded because the Liberal cause had been subjected to the machinations of the Roman Catholic Bishop. However, the assumption, in 1850, of new, and more tolerant, leadership, both within the Church and the Liberal Party, gave the latter the opportunity to escape from its former subservience while the Liberal exploitation of the emerging Wesleyan-Anglican educational conflicts contributed to the forging of a new Party image. Having thus accomplished, by 1854, a broader base of denominational support by acquisition of Protestant, particularly Wesleyan, backing the Liberals were able to admit relatively just denominational returns in their Representation Bill, while the case for reform became so strengthened that Responsible Government could not be denied them.

However, because of the prominence of the Roman Catholic Church in the Liberal movement, opposition to the Liberals had tended to develop an anti-Catholic flavor. The Conservatives, therefore, had been able to contain the Liberals, somewhat, at least in the largely Protestant ridings and when, after 1850, the Liberals with their campaign for Wesleyan support attempted invasion of their opponents' camp, the latter clutched the bugbear of Roman Catholic Ascendancy to prevent Protestant defections. With acceleration of the Liberal campaign, from 1852 onwards, the struggle over Representation gradually reduced itself to a war of creeds. As the Protestants, however, failed to unite in response

religious conflicts in the Assembly the Conservatives, fearing the struggle lost, attempted the grass-roots organization of a mass Protestant, anti-Catholic crusade falling which they sought by claiming to be a purely 'Protestant' Party, to retain power by invoking the religious distributions of the Representation Bill. Nevertheless, the Liberals, solidly entrenched in the Catholic districts together with Wesleyan backing, especially in Burin, easily won the 1855 election while Anglican support in Harbour Grace gave them an extra cushion of victory.

Forming the first Responsible Administration in 1855, the future looked very bright for the Liberal Party, but the outward appearance only masked the seeds of weakness that lay dormant within. In spite of the fact that the Liberals had acquired substantial support in two, largely Protestant, districts, yet the Party remained, basically, a Roman Catholic organization, a fact pointedly demonstrated by the nature of the political appointments made in their first year of office. Consisting of a conglomeration of elements, merchants, shopkeepers and lawyers, natives and Irish expatriates, pro-clericals and independents, 'baymen' and St. John's residents, the Liberal Party, in order to remain a stable organization, would need to develop an orientation that would lessen its dependence on Church influence. As had been proven, in the 1830's, clerical influence had not even been sufficient to unite Roman Catholics, a body most susceptible to Church direction, while the attempt to do so had tended to alienate Protestant support. However, the Liberal Party, once it gained power, tended to move in the same direction as its predecessor had more than twenty years before, a movement that became

highly accelerated after John Kent assumed the Premiership. By 1859, not only were there signs of diminishing Wesleyan support, but the spirit of independence among Roman Catholics, which had manifested itself against Bishop Fleming, had begun to arise against Bishop Mullock. The Liberal Party could not very long remain secure unless its increasing Catholic orientation were curtailed.

However, the assumption of power by the Liberal Party in 1855 set in motion a chain of circumstances that, by 1861, had brought that organization to the point where it was obliged to either resign itself completely to the influence of Bishop Mullock, or set itself in opposition to the Church altogether. In the dispensation of its financial rewards, especially in the administration of social services, the government earned allegiance from the electors in its own right and therefore, instead of becoming subservient to the Catholic Church, the Liberal Party became, in its stead, a rival. Sensing that the curtailment of Church influence was an ultimate result of the governmental system of distributing poor relief the Roman Catholic Bishop denounced the system and appealed to his flock to install representatives more cognizant of their Church's role in politics and more subservient to its direction. While the Kent Party showed its backing firmly behind the Bishop and became, really, a political arm of that Church, yet Roman Catholics rebelled against Mullock's leadership and rejected the interference of the Church in the election of their representatives. As the Priests' followers were beaten and shot by Independent Catholics the Liberal Party lay impaled on its own altar while the remaining Protestant support completely vanished.

In the meantime the Conservatives, having attempted since 1850 to halt the reform movement and prevent their opponents from taking office, had failed in their bid for Protestant union. However, with the Catholic Church, in 1861, condemning Protestantism and urging a Catholic crusade what had, heretofore, proven beyond the Conservative grasp now became a reality as Bishop Mullock forced Protestants into an alliance against his Church. Nevertheless, the division within Catholic ranks had signified the latter's repugnance to Catholic union per se while limits to the influence of religion on Colonial politics had also been demonstrated by the fact that Protestant union had been accomplished only when the Catholic Church had clearly urged a religious campaign.

## APPENDIX

Map of Newfoundland showing the Geographical Distribution  
of the Electoral Districts, 1832-1855.<sup>a</sup>



## APPENDIX II

THE ELECTORAL RESULTS FOR THE YEARS 1832, 1837, 1848, 1855.  
1859 AND 1861 SHOWING POLITICAL, DENOMINATIONAL  
AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFILIATION

The Electoral Results of 1848<sup>a</sup>

## APPENDIX II, A:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	RELIGION	OCCUPATION
St. John's	John Kent (L) <sup>b</sup>	R.C.	Commission Agent
	Lawrence O'Brien (L)	R.C.	Merchant
	(Replaced 1850 by Philip Little (L)	R.C.	Lawyer
	R.J. Parsons (L)	C.E.	Newspaperman
Conception Bay	J.L. Prendergast (L)	R.C.	Small Businessman
	E. Hanrahan (L)	R.C.	-
	N. Molloy (L)	-	Physician
	R. Rankin (C) <sup>c</sup>	-	Merchant
Twillingate-Fogo	G.H. Emerson (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
Bonaville Bay	R. Carter (C)	C.E.	Ex-Naval Officer
Trinity Bay	T.B. Job (C)	Congreg.	Merchant
Ferryland	Peter Winsor (L)	R.C.	Planter
Burin	J.G. Falle (C)	Congreg.	Merchant
Fortune Bay	H.W. Hoyles (C)	C.E.	Barrister
Placentia-St. Mary's	J. Delaney (L)	R.C.	Keeper of the House of Assembly
	Ambrose Shea (L)	R.C.	Merchant

<sup>a</sup>Those statistics have been gathered from various sources, principally Gunn, p. 193, newspapers, Governor's Despatches, Speeches of Assembly members and Newfoundland Almanacs.

<sup>b</sup>Liberal Party.

<sup>c</sup>Conservative Party.



## APPENDIX II

The Electoral Results of 1832<sup>a</sup>

## APPENDIX II, B:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	RELIGION	OCCUPATION
St. John's	Patrick Kough (C)	R.C.	Contractor
	John Kent (L)	R.C.	Commission Agent
	William Thomas (L)	C.E.	Merchant
	(replaced 1833 by William Carson (L))	Socinian	Physician
Conception Bay	Peter Brown (L)	R.C.	Dealer
	James Power (L)	R.C.	Dealer
	Charles Cozens (C)	-	Merchant
	Robert Pack (C)	-	Merchant
Twillingate-Fogo	T.R. Bennett (C)	C.E.	Merchant
Bonavista Bay	William Brown (C)	-	-
Trinity Bay	J.B. Garland (C)	C.E.	Merchant
	(replaced 1833 by W.B. Row (C))	C.E.	Barrister
Ferryland	Robert Carter (C)	C.E.	Ex-Naval Officer
Burlin	William Hooper	-	-
Fortune Bay	Newman Hoyles (C)	C.E.	Colonial Treasurer
Placentia-St. Mary's	Roger Sweetman (C)	R.C.	Merchant
	John Martin (C)	C.E.	Merchant's Agent

<sup>a</sup>These statistics have been taken from various sources, principally Gunn, p. 193, newspapers and Governor's Despatches.

## APPENDIX II

The Electoral Results of 1837<sup>a</sup>

## APPENDIX II, C:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	RELIGION	OCCUPATION
St. John's	William Carson (L) John Kent (L) Patrick Morris (L) (Replaced 1840 by Lawrence O'Brien (L)	Socinian R.C. R.C. R.C.	Physician Commission Agent Merchant Merchant
Conception Bay	Peter Brown (L) John McCarthy (L) Anthony Godfrey (L) James Power (L)	R.C. R.C. - R.C.	Dealer Planter Dealer Dealer
Twillingate-Fogo	E.J. Dwyer (L)	R.C.	Fisherman
Bonavista Bay	H.A. Emerson (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
Trinity Bay	T.F. Moore (L)	-	Fisherman
Ferryland	Peter Winser	C.E.	Planter
Burin	H.G. Butler	-	Small Businessman
Fortune Bay	W.B. Row (C)	C.E.	Barrister
Placentia-St. Mary's	Patrick Doyle (L) J.V. Nugent (L)	R.C. R.C.	Ship Captain School Teacher

<sup>a</sup>These statistics have been from various sources, mainly  
Gunn, p. 195, newspapers, Governor's Despatches and Speeches of the  
Assembly members.

## APPENDIX II

The Electoral Returns of 1855<sup>a</sup>

## APPENDIX II, D:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	RELIGION	OCCUPATION
St. John's West	P.F. Little (L)	R.C.	Lawyer
	Ambrose Shea (L)	R.C.	Merchant
	John Fox (L)	R.C.	Merchant
St. John's East	John Kent (L)	R.C.	Commission Agent
	R.J. Parsons (L)	C.E.	Newspaperman
	Peter Winsor (L)	R.C.	Planter
Harbour Main	William Talbot (L)	R.C.	Shool teacher
	Thomas Byrne (L)	R.C.	Road Inspector
Port de Grave	Robert Brown (C)	C.E.	Bank Manager
Harbour Grace	J.L. Prendergast (L)	R.C.	Small Businessman
	John Hayward (L)	C.E.	Lawyer
Carbonear	Edmund Hanrahan (L)	R.C.	-
Bay de Verde	John Demester (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Trinity Bay	Stephen March (C)	Wes.	Merchant
	John Winter (C)	C.E.	Physician
	F.B.T. Carter (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
Bonavista Bay	Robert Carter (C)	C.E.	Ex-Naval Officer
	J.H. Warren (C)	C.E.	Merchant
	M. Walbank (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
Twillingate-Fogo	W.H. Ellis (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	Thomas Knight (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Ferryland	Thomas Glen (L)	Pres.	Merchant
	E.D. Shea (L)	R.C.	Newspaperman
Placentia-St. Mary's	G.J. McGee (L)	R.C.	Lawyer
	John McGee (L)	R.C.	Keeper of House of Assembly
	Michael Kelly (L)	R.C.	School Teacher
Burin	Clement Benning (L)	R.C.	-
	Patrick Morris	R.C.	Clerk of the Peace
Fortune Bay	Hugh Hoyles (C)	C.E.	Barrister
Burgeo-Lapointe	Robert Prowse (C)		Merchant

<sup>a</sup>Those statistics were gathered from various sources, mainly Newfoundland Blue Book, 1855, newspapers, Governor's Despatches, business directories, Newfoundland Almanacs and Assembly Speeches.

## APPENDIX II

The Electoral Returns of 1859<sup>a</sup>

## APPENDIX II, E:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	RELIGION	OCCUPATION
St. John's West	P. Barron (L)	R.C.	Merchant
	J. Casey (L)	R.C.	Farmer
	J.S. Dwyer (L)	R.C.	Postal Worker
St. John's East	John Kent (L)	R.C.	Commission Agent
	John Kavanagh (L)	R.C.	Merchant
	R.J. Parsons (L)	C.E.	Newspaperman
Harbour Main	Charles Furey (L)	R.C.	Planter
	Patrick Nowlan (L)	R.C.	Shopkeeper
Port de Grave	John Leamon (C)	-	Small Businessman
Harbour Grace	J.L. Prendergast (L)	R.C.	Small Businessman
	John Hayward (L)	C.E.	Lawyer
Carbonear	Edmund Hanrahan (L)	R.C.	-
Bay de Verde	John Demister (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Trinity Bay	F.B.T. Carter (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	John Winter (C)	C.E.	Physician
	Stephen Rendell (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Bonavista Bay	J.H. Warren (C)	C.E.	Merchant
	M. Walbank (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	Stephen March (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Twillingate-Fogo	W.V. Whiteway (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	Thomas Knight (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Ferryland	E.D. Shea (L)	R.C.	Newspaperman
	Thomas Glen (L)	Pres.	Merchant
Placentia-St. Mary's	George Hogsett (L)	R.C.	Lawyer
	John Delaney (L)	R.C.	Keeper of House of Assembly & Road Surveyor
	Joseph English (L)	R.C.	
Burin	Ambrose Shea (L)	R.C.	Merchant
	J.J. Rogerson (L)	Wes.	Merchant
Fortune Bay	Robert Carter (C)	C.E.	Ex-Naval Officer
Burgeo-Lapointe	James Seaton (C)	Pres.	Newspaperman

<sup>a</sup>Those statistics were from various sources, mainly  
Newfoundland Blue Book, 1859, newspapers, business directories, Newfoundland  
Almanacs and Assembly Speeches.

## APPENDIX II

The Electoral Returns of 1861<sup>a</sup>

## APPENDIX II, F:

DISTRICT	MEMBER	RELIGION	OCCUPATION
St. John's West	John Casey (L)	R.C.	Farmer
	Henry Renouf (L)	R.C.	Officer, Volunteer Rifle Corps
	Thomas Talbot (L)	R.C.	Newspaperman
St. John's East	John Kent (L)	R.C.	Commission Agent
	R.J. Parsons (L)	R.C.	Newspaperman
	John Kavanagh (L)	R.C.	Merchant
Harbour Main	Thomas Byrne (Ind.L.)	R.C.	Road Inspector
	Patrick Nowlan (Ind.L.)	R.C.	Shopkeeper
Port de Grave	John Leamon (C)	-	Small Businessman
Harbour Grace	John Hayward (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	Henry T. Moore (C)	C.E.	Customs Officer
Carbonear	Edmund Hanrahan (L)	R.C.	-
Bay de Verde	John Bemister (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Bonavista Bay	J.H. Warren (C)	C.E.	Merchant
	M. Walbank (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	Stephen March (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Trinity Bay	F.B.T. Carter (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	John Winter (C)	C.E.	Physician
	Stephen Rendell (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Twillingate-Fogo	W.V. Whiteway (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	Thomas Knight (C)	Wes.	Merchant
Ferryland	E.D. Shea (L)	R.C.	Newspaperman
	Thomas Glen (L)	Pres.	Merchant
Placentia-St. Mary's	Richard McGrath (Ind.L.)	R.C.	Preventive Officer
	A. Shea (Ind. L.)	R.C.	Merchant
	W.G. Hood (d. 1861 & replaced by	R.C.	Merchant
	Pierce Barron (Ind.L.) (Dec. 23, 61)	R.C.	Merchant
Burin	H.W. Hoyles (C)	C.E.	Lawyer
	Edward Evans (C)	Wes.	Lawyer
Fortune Bay	Robert Carter (C)	C.E.	Ex-Naval Officer
Burgeo-Lapointe	D.W. Prowse (C)	C.E.	Lawyer

<sup>a</sup>Those statistics were from various sources mainly  
Newfoundland Blue Book, 1861, newspapers, business directories, Newfoundland  
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