

The Catholic Normal School Issue in the North-West Territories, 1884-1900

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To the casual reader of the history of education and teacher training in the North-West Territories from 1884-1900, it appears, on the surface, that the loss of the right to separate normal schools by the Roman Catholic minority *is the story of a simple failure to meet legitimate requirements*. The minority's inability to provide an experienced normal school principal who could organize a Catholic normal school seems to be the basic reason given for the loss. It is my opinion, however, that no matter what qualified personnel the minority might have been able to provide to fulfill requirements, their efforts to establish a Catholic normal school would have been to no avail. Evidence seems to point to political opportunism and a growing intolerance for anything denominational (an intolerance that was centred in the more powerful political and educational leadership found in the North-West at that time) as the real reef on which the separate normal school issue ran aground.

As a general background to this paper it should be known that the North-West Territories of 1871-1905 consisted mainly of the area presently known as the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. The political history of the Territories had roughly three periods: 1871-1876, government under the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and an appointed Council; 1876-1888, government by the newly formed North-West Territorial Council; and 1888-1905, government by the North-West Legislative Assembly. This last period witnessed the struggle for responsible government (1888-1897), and for provincial status (1897-1905).

Regarding the Catholic struggle for a normal school in the North-West Territories, I wish to point out that there were many

aspects to this issue, such as: certification of teachers, high school enrolments, curriculum and texts, French language instruction, and qualified personnel. All of these were closely intermeshed with the normal school question. In this paper, however, I will concentrate on the aspect of qualified personnel within the political and religious context of the times.

During the period of 1894-1900 the issue of the minority's right to regulate its own teacher training and the subsequent loss of this right, was not an isolated development involving only the resolutions and regulations of the Board of Education and of the North-West legislature, and a few persons such as Church and Government leaders. It was something that had wider horizons and involved deeper and more hidden factors.

To get a broader perspective of the teacher training issue one must understand, among other things, the population shift that occurred during those years, the composition (by religious affiliation) of the population as it shifted, and also the powerful personality and subsequent influence of such leaders as Haultain and Goggin. In addition, it is well to be cognizant of the changes in the School Ordinances passed by the Territorial Assembly in successive years for these ordinances are a reflection of the attitude of the majority in the Territorial governing body, a majority that increasingly supported non-denominational schools.

The population shift in the Territories between 1881 and 1891 is illustrated in the following table:

Population N.W.T. according to Religious Affiliation

Year	Roman Catholics	Protestants
1881	4,443	4,880 ¹

¹ *Census of Canada 1880-81*, Vol. 1, pp. 202-203.

1885	9,301	25,924 ²
1891	13,008	44,086 ³

Up to 1885 it looked as if the Catholic population could constitute a majority. However, the general influx of immigrants beginning in 1885 with the completion of the railway included large numbers of Protestants, and by 1892 their number had overwhelmingly increased as compared to the Roman Catholic population. The point to keep in mind is that in the early 1880's the Roman Catholic population was keeping abreast with the Protestant, and indeed there were fears by some that it might outnumber the Protestant. It was in 1884 when the Catholic population was still strong, that the dual system of education was *unanimously* adopted and launched by the North-West Council then consisting of thirteen Protestants and two Catholics.⁴ This was the year before the heavy influx of Protestant immigrants into the North-West.

It is significant that the attitude of the Protestants who as a majority in the 1884 Council supported an ordinance allowing for a dual system in education, shifted to support a unified non-denominational system in 1892, just seven years later. By 1892 it was obvious that the Roman Catholic population would never constitute a majority. This changing of attitude hints of political opportunism. It is a story that in the West first happened in Manitoba, and then repeated itself in a similar manner in the North-West Territories. When Catholics were in a majority in early Manitoba (1870-1871) the minority's rights were respected by giving equal rights to Protestants in the control of their own schools. As Protestants became a majority and gradually grew to be a strong majority, every opportunity was taken to pass ordinances that took from the Catholic minority every right that just a few years prior Protestants themselves had asked for, and held, as their right.⁵ Dr. M. T. Toombs, an authority on the educational history of the

² *Census of the Provisional Districts of the North West Territories*, pp. 6-7.

³ *Census of Canada, 1890-91*, pp. 328-329.

⁴ *Canada Sessional Papers, 1894*, Vol. XXVII, 17, p. 63.

⁵ In Appendix 1 of WEIR'S *Separate School Law in the Prairie Provinces* the following extract from the Hansard Debates on the separate school question is given: "Mr. W. Scott, March 31, 1905, Hansard, p. 3612.

'I want to say, speaking as a Protestant, not as a member of the minority, that in view of the history of this matter I would be ashamed of myself as a Protestant and ashamed of the Protestant majority, if we would wish now, merely because we have the power, to deny the very thing which we as Protestants stood out for when a Protestant minority was affected.' It was rather expected by the Federal Parliament

North-West, outlines evidence in his doctoral dissertation that brings him to conclude that “Protestants were fearful of Roman Catholic control” and “The dual system appeared to be the answer to a Catholic dominated state.”⁶

It appeared both in Manitoba, in 1871, and in the Territories in 1884, that the Roman Catholic population might continue to be equal to or outnumber the Protestant. If this was to be the situation, then the Protestants, like their compatriots in Quebec, wanted to protect themselves under a dual system, and the Roman Catholics were just as anxious to have their schools under the control of a Catholic dominated central authority. The Quebec pattern of organization, with which many were already familiar, and which, with modifications was established in Manitoba, appeared to be the best answer to the problem.⁷

Toombs demonstrates that the danger of Roman Catholic domination rapidly diminished after 1885. This was certainly one reason for the later unpopularity of having two school systems.

With the influx of large numbers from Ontario, the Ryerson tradition of the small district and locally controlled separate school system with a unified central organization, came to be popularly accepted among Protestants. In addition, the Manitoba legislation of 1890, which created a non-sectarian Department of Education with a responsible minister at its head, and which made provision, at the local level, for public school districts only, had considerable impact on the thinking of those in positions of leadership in the Territories.⁸

It seems evident from Toombs’ study that the Protestant support of the dual system in 1884 was prompted more by self-interest than by tolerance, and the change to supporting a unified nondenominational system in 1892, was in itself a significant obstacle to the establishment of normal schools by the

of 1875 according to Mr. Scott that the minority of the North West Territories would be Protestant.”

⁶ M. TOOMBS, *The Control and Support of Public Education in Rupert's Land and the North West Territories to 1905 and in Saskatchewan to 1960*, Vol. 1, pp. 153-158.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

minority. By 1892, with a Protestant majority in *population*, in the *legislature*, and on the *Board of Education* (which in that year became the Council of Public Instruction), the stage was set for the change that put the Catholic minority at the mercy of two powerful political and educational figures, Haultain and Goggin.

Let us now examine another factor that made it increasingly impossible for the minority to have their own normal schools: the gradual lessening of control exercised by the individual sections of the Board of Education and the increase of control exercised by the whole board, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Protestant members on the Board. This is illustrated by a series of Territorial ordinances.

Ordinance No. 5 of 1884, unanimously adopted by the North-West Council consisting as we have seen of thirteen Protestants and two Catholics, provided for a Board of Education composed of six Protestants and six Catholics. Each section of the board was given the control and management of schools of its section, qualification and licensing of its teachers, curriculum and texts of its schools, and appointment of its own inspectors. The board as a whole exercised the power to make regulations “for the general organization of the schools,” to control “registering and reporting of daily attendance,” and to call meetings of the whole board.⁹

Ordinance No. 3 of 1885 transferred the power of appointing inspectors, and of examination, grading and licensing of teachers to the whole board. The equality principle was still in effect in the membership of the board, but the membership was reduced to two members for each section.¹⁰

Ordinance No. 10 of 1886 re-instated the power of the individual sections as in the 1884 ordinance, but it provided for the discontinuance of the designation terms “Roman Catholic” and “Protestant” in the erection of public school districts, and gave control over these non-designated schools to the whole board.¹¹

Ordinance No. 2 of 1887 gave increased power to the whole board with the two sections retaining administration of their schools, choice of texts, appointment of inspectors, and cancellation of teachers’ certificates. This ordinance also changed the membership of the Board of Education to five Protestants and three Roman Catholics, thus supplanting the equality principle of 1884.¹² This ordinance was the first public manifestation of the

⁹ *Ordinances N.W.T. 1878-84*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁰ *North-West Ordinances 1885-86*, p. 64.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 198-200.

¹² *Ordinances N.W.T. 1885-1887*, pp. 3-5.

change of attitude of the Protestant majority. Forget, a member of the Catholic section of the board, had this to say about it:

In 1887, the school laws were again amended and revised. This time a great effort was made to give us legislation on the model of the one imposed later on in 1892. The blow was very difficult to ward off, the more so because it was unexpected and came from high.

There would also be much to say on the fight that Hon. Judge Rouleau had to outstand in the Council of the North-West Territories, for the maintenance of our rights; but as it ended by a compromise I will merely mention in what the ordinance of 1887 differed from the preceding ones.

The principle of equal representation, which had until then prevailed in the constitution of the board of education, was abandoned. The number of members was raised to eight, five Protestants and three Catholics. The sections preserved the administration of their respective schools; the right to choose the books; to appoint their inspectors, and to cancel for cause any teacher's certificate; but all the other powers were henceforth to be exercised by the whole board.¹³

The 1888 ordinance brought no further significant changes in control, but Ordinance No. 28 of 1891-1892 took from each section the right to appoint its own inspectors. Furthermore, the term of office for members of the Board of Education was changed from "two years and until their successors are appointed" to "during pleasure" of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.¹⁴ Finally, Ordinance No. 22 of 1892 abolished the dual system, and instead of the Board of Education, it set up a Council of Public Instruction composed of the Executive Committee of the Legislature, and four appointed members (two Roman Catholics and two Protestants) who had no vote.¹⁵

Another element that in all probability was involved in the whole educational issue was the appearance and flourishing of societies of active Freemasons and Orangemen. Both these groups had been associated with anti-catholicism and non-denominationalism. Available biographical information of the members of the North-West Council, and later of the North-West Assembly, indicates that at least one-third of the legislative body

¹³ *Canada Sessional Papers 1894*, Vol. XXVII, 17, p. 65.

¹⁴ *Ordinances N.W.T.*, pp. 151-152.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 102ff

from 1888 on, were also members of Masonic or Orange societies.¹⁶ The first large percentage of Freemasons and Orangemen in the legislature coincides with the first serious difficulties sustained by the minority regarding educational ordinances. It does not seem unreasonable to believe that there is a relationship here, for in his book entitled *Separate Schools in the New Provinces*, Armstrong (a Grand Orange Master), writes at length about the part played by the Orange Association in Manitoba and about “the service the Order rendered to the one national school principle.”¹⁷ It seems hard to believe that the educational struggle that took place (next door) in the North-West Territories immediately after the Manitoba school question, was totally ignored by the same Associations.

Finally, two persons of power and influence in the North West legislature and in education affairs, Haultain and Goggin, were instrumental in systematically diminishing denominationalism in North-West education. Both were strongly opposed to Catholics and took every opportunity possible to weaken the position of the Catholic minority in education. With himself as a powerful leader in the legislature, and as chairman of the Council of Public Instruction, and with Goggin as his chief Superintendent, Haultain was in a position in 1892 to wield much power in opposing any denominational interests. At a banquet in his honor at Pincher Creek in 1891, Haultain made a clear declaration of his attitude towards, and of his campaign against, separate schools. “His position with regard to the separate school question was that he would work and vote against it as hard as possible.”¹⁸ A further indication of Haultain’s attitude towards Catholics comes from Father Leduc who was a member of the Catholic section of the Board of Education. Referring to the two Roman Catholics on the Council from 1892 onwards, who held only advisory roles without vote, he writes:

¹⁶ Books consulted in special collection of the Shortt Library, and the Archives of Saskatchewan, University of Saskatchewan:

Pioneers and Prominent People of Saskatchewan, Pub. 1924.

The Canadian Men and Women of the Time, 1898.

HAWKES, *Saskatchewan and Its People*, Vols. I, II, III.

BLACK, *The History of Saskatchewan*, Vols. I, II.

Who’s Who in Western Canada, Vol. I, 1911 (Parker Edition).

Who’s Who and Why, Vol. II, 1912 (Parker Edition).

Freemasonry in Manitoba. 1864-1925, Wm Douglas.

50th Anniversary of Masonry in Saskatchewan 1879-1929.

MORGAN, *Dominion Annual Register and Review 1886*.

GEMMILL, *The Canadian Parliamentary Companion*.

¹⁷ This book can be found in the special collections of the Shortt Library, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

¹⁸ *The Macleod Gazette*, February 5, 1891.

...their office, as Mr. Haultain himself, the Chief of the Executive and the President of the Council of Public Instruction, said to me at Regina, in October 1894, is nothing but a real farce. "But," added he, "I cannot consent to have it otherwise. As Chief of the government in this country, I am responsible for the schools of the North West, and, as long as I hold my position, I do not wish to expose myself to be beaten, at the Council of Education, by a vote contrary to my views."¹⁹

The hostile attitude of Haultain towards the Catholic members and their interests was confirmed by his underhanded dealings. In 1893, Forget (associated for eight years with the Board of Education) said that he had consented to the request of Mr. Haultain, Chairman of the Executive Committee, to be one of the two Catholic members. However, since he was soon leaving for France for reasons of health, Forget asked Mr. Haultain to call a meeting of the Council before his departure. Haultain agreed and set a date. The day came and went without any communication from Haultain. Unable to put off his trip, Forget begged Haultain to choose someone else as member of the council if it were to convene in his absence. Three months later, on his return trip to Regina, Forget found out that he, with Rev. Abbey Caron, had been officially appointed to the Council. But what was more –

together with his official nomination, the Reverend gentleman [Caron] received notice to attend a meeting at the office of the Board of Education that same day, at one hour's time, in order to take part in the deliberations of the Council, or rather to state his views and desires, for he was prohibited from giving any vote whatever. He had only just arrived in the country, he had not yet had time to study the school Ordinance, so difficult and so complicated. He knew absolutely nothing of the former regulations and had no idea of these about to be proposed for his approbation. No matter; he must go at once, without having anyone to support him or whom he could consult.²⁰

Haultain knew how much importance Forget attached to this first session, nonetheless he would not wait for Forget's return. In September of the same year, Forget received from Father Caron a copy of the regulations passed at that meeting. Though he was a member of the Council, Forget had not officially received any official documents or minutes from the secretary.

¹⁹ *LEDUC, Hostility Unmasked*, n.d. p. 3 (Shortt Library).

²⁰ *Ibid.*

As far as the Catholic minority was concerned, Haultain preferred outwardly to show great affability towards them, but his actions showed that he had no intention of granting any of their requests. Naturally, the minority lost all confidence in him. A letter of Bishop Legal of St. Albert to Archbishop Langevin of St. Boniface dated December 19, 1897, stresses this fact when he wrote "...this is always the way with him: he seems to have decided to consent to everything and in the end doesn't grant anything."²¹ Similarly, a letter of Father Leduc, who had been a member of the Board of Education, to Archbishop Taché, dated September 17, 1890, expressed the minority's fears and opinion of Haultain's and Goggin's attitude, and of their political tactics of gradually reducing the minority's rights and powers through forced concessions:

Mr. Barrett and I remain in conclusion quite convinced that these gentlemen of the Council of Public Instruction are insisting on executing the programme of Freemasonry . . .

Mr. Haultain more open and more frank, would willingly take the bull by the horns at once; Goggin, real sectarian freemason, makes no secret of saying that he is in full sympathy with Greenway, Martin, and Company, but he criticizes their humor which is too openly bellicose; it is better says he, to go more - - - to arrive at the same goal; come what will, to have the Catholics take one step, then a second, then a third in the way of concessions.

(Note; the blank indicates a word that was too blurred in the original to be deciphered.)²²

Haultain and Goggin generally made certain that they kept the letter of the Territorial Ordinances, but they often ignored their spirit. This is suggested by Mr. Tarte, a federal member of parliament at that time:

No one had the right to deprive Catholics of the North West Territories of their Separate Schools. The Hon. Mr. Haultain... understood that pretty well. That is why he went about it in a roundabout way. He overhauled all the Ordinances relating to schools and while the New Ordinance reaffirms the rights of

²¹ [20a in the original] *Canada Sessional Papers, 1894*, Vol. XXVII, 17, pp. 61ff

²² [20b in the original] Archives of Archbishop of St. Boniface.

Catholics to Separate Schools, it makes these dependent on such conditions that they were virtually suppressed. So that Mr. Haultain had done indirectly what he could not do directly.²³

In reviewing the educational history at the time of Haultain and Goggin, a number of other questions come to mind: Why was it that under Haultain and Goggin so many difficulties were put in the way of the teaching Sisters such as in the case of Sister Bond's application for a professional certificate in 1893? Why were there directly conflicting inspector's reports made out for a number of Catholic Schools such as Goggin's reports which seriously downgraded Catholic schools which shortly before had been considered highly satisfactory in Hewgill's reports?²⁴ Why were Catholic teachers, certified from other provinces and from the United States, frequently given only provisional certificates instead of certificates of equal standing? Why were these certificates made valid sometimes for only three to nine months instead of the usual one year period?²⁵

Though Haultain's overall contribution to western education cannot be denied, neither can his opposition to anything Catholic in education be overlooked. His policy of steady, but gradual, change in educational affairs was largely responsible for preventing the growth and expansion of the minority's schools in the way that the minority wished to see them develop. Haultain was careful not to deprive the minority of its legal right of establishing schools of its own, but he effectively curtailed freedom of action by depriving the minority of basic control over inspection, curriculum, and teacher certification.

In summary, the appearance of a strong Protestant majority in the general population by 1892, the gradual diminishing powers and rights of the individual sections of the Board of Education with the corresponding increase of power vested in the whole Board, and the simultaneous increase in Protestant membership of the Board – all this, coupled with the Protestant change from support of a dual system to support of a non-denominational unitary system, made up the general background for the issue of the minority's normal school rights. Add to this the appearance of Haultain in the Territorial Legislature in 1887 and his subsequent position as Chairman of

²³ [21 in the original; all subsequent notes were originally two digits lower in number] WEIR, *The Separate School Question in Canada*, p. 242 (Shortt Library).

²⁴ LEDUC, *Hostility Unmasked*, n.d., pp. 20-24.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

the Council of Public Instruction; together with appointment of Goggin, former principal of the Normal School in Winnipeg in 1884, as Superintendent of Education and one has a good general feeling of the broader factors that made it increasingly impossible for the minority to exercise any right of having a normal school.

Let us now examine one of the more important aspects of the minority's struggle: its failure to provide a suitable person to be principal of a normal school department.

The School Ordinance of 1888 provided for the establishment of a high school branch in any public school provided the following stipulations were met: average daily attendance not less than sixty pupils; minimum number of teachers employed not less than three, and number of enrolled high school pupils not less than fifteen. It also provided that in any two adjacent school districts "jointly fulfilling the above requirements a Union School may be established in either district." In addition, the establishment of a normal department might be authorized in any Union School at the discretion of the Board of Education.²⁶

In January 1888, the Board of Education passed an important resolution, the interpretation of which led later to much controversy. The Board felt that provision must be made for the training of teachers in the N.W.T. and that the appointment of a normal school principal would be thus necessary. Hence the Board requested a grant from the Federal Government. We find the following detailed reference to that resolution in the *Report of the Board of Education, September 1890-September 1891*, pp. 21-22:

The action taken last year by the Board with reference to Normal training, although tentative in its character, was attended with such results in Eastern Assiniboia as to warrant more decided action. The Board has, therefore, decided that, for the future, all persons who hold non-professional certificates, and desire to teach in the Inspectorat Districts of Eastern and Western Assiniboia, must receive adequate Normal training, either at Moosomin or Regina.

The Board earnestly desires to extend similar advantages to all other Inspectorates under its jurisdiction, but the schools in these inspectorates are so few and so widely scattered, that the same course is out of the question.

To meet the difficulty, the Board would respectfully submit a

²⁶ *Ordinances 1888*, c. 59, sec. 177-179.

proposition made by it to the authorities at Ottawa, in January 1888, in the following terms, namely:

That in the opinion of this Board it is necessary to make provision for the instruction and training of Teachers for our Public Schools in the Science and Art of Teaching;

That the Board feels that the appointment of a Normal School Principal, whose duty it would be to hold Normal School sessions in different parts of the country, would have the best possible results in increasing the efficiency of teachers and stimulating education.

Therefore resolved -

That His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor be requested to urge upon the Dominion Government the advisability of granting the sum of five thousand dollars for the next financial year for Normal School purposes.

The question arises whether this January 1888 resolution of the Board indicated that the principle of the dual system was not to be extended beyond the high school. It appeared that the Board was asking for a single normal school principal for public schools (and "Public" could be taken to mean both Protestant and Roman Catholic public schools). But the two Roman Catholic members of the Board who were present, Amédée Forget and Father Leduc, supported the resolution. A close examination of the Board's report shows that the idea of an "appointment of a Normal School Principal, whose duty it would be to hold Normal School sessions in different parts of the country" is not found in the resolution proper, but only in the preamble to that resolution. In addition the resolution proper states that "the sum of five thousand dollars" is for "Normal School purposes" without specifying what these purposes were. Nonetheless, the interpretation of the resolution given later by Haultain seems to have been that the funds requested were specifically for "a normal school principal, whose duty it would be to hold normal sessions in different parts of the Country."²⁷ It must be noted that Haultain was not a member of the Board which passed the resolution of 1888. On the other hand, Forget and Leduc, members of the 1888 Board, both entertained an interpretation of the resolution which was different from that of Haultain. Leduc writes:

²⁷ *Canada Sessional Papers*, Vol. XXVII, 17, p. 13.

In the month of January, 1888, the board of education, composed then of eight members, among whom five Protestants and three Catholics discussed the advisability of having in a near future normal schools, that is to say, as soon as circumstances would permit and such establishments would be practically possible both for Protestants and Catholics. I was then a member of the board with Hon. Judge Rouleau and Mr. A. Forget. Hon. Judge Rouleau was absent on that day, but Mr. Forget and myself took part in the discussion, and all the members of the board, Protestant and Catholic, were of the opinion that normal school institutions could but stimulate and promote the cause of education. It was proposed to hire a principal, but Mr. Forget immediately pointed out that two were required, one for the Protestants and one for the Catholics. As the thing was not to be done at once, it was resolved to pass only the resolution, mentioned by the privy council, asking for a subsidy of \$5,000 (five thousand dollars) for normal school purposes, without specifying them. The board of education reserved to itself to regulate the use of the \$5,000 if that sum was granted for the purpose in view, and the Catholic section knew that it had also a right to a part of that sum, if it were granted.²⁸

Supporting Leduc's interpretation Forget writes:

The facts which here relate and with which my name is associated, are all fresh in my memory, and as they are in accordance with my own remembrance I can, without the least hesitation, corroborate them by my own testimony.

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I will say further, I am willing to believe Mr. Haultain and his colleagues are in good faith in the conclusions which they draw from the resolutions of the board of education cited by them. These gentlemen not having been members of the old board of education, could not have known its deliberations but by the minutes thereof. Now, there is nothing in those minutes to indicate to those who may today read them, especially if they do not belong to our faith, that the Catholic members of the board did not intend to give to those resolutions the meanings attributed to them. It seems, however, that for Catholics, the name of Rev. Father Leduc, if not those of his colleagues on the board of education, should not have given an effective support to those resolutions unless

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

circumstances guaranteed our rights.²⁹

It is quite clear from the foregoing that the Roman Catholic members of the Board were, in January 1888, well aware of the implications involved if a single normal school principal was to be appointed. To them the resolution was being passed with the understanding that the dual system beyond the high school was not being jeopardized.

In March 1889 the Board of Education passed provisional regulations regarding Union Schools which stipulated that the head teacher of every high school branch of a Union school should be called the principal, and that the principal was to be a graduate some British university or in the opinion of the Board of Education held qualifications equal to such a degree. This same set of provisional regulations included directives for curriculum, textbooks, the conditions of attendance, and the examination and certification procedures for normal or professional training. All students in the normal department of any Union school in the North-West Territories were to take the same professional curriculum and study from the same professional textbooks.³⁰ Although this provisional set of regulations seems to indicate that steps were again being taken by the whole board to restrict the dual system the elementary and high schools of the Territories, one must not overlook the fact that these same regulations were not meant to be a conclusive pattern for succeeding years. This seems to be clearly indicated in the preamble to the regulations of March 1889, as presented in the report of September 17, 1889:

The Board of Education, in putting forth the regulations relating to Union Schools, desire it to be understood that these regulations are tentative and provisional, the idea being to bring such schools into operation as soon as possible. When they exist and the Board has had an opportunity of forming an opinion about them, it will revise all the regulations relating to the attainments of its teachers.

With regard to Normal sessions, the Board feels that it must at this stage of things rely greatly upon the judgment and good sense of Inspectors and Principals to make such arrangements as will result in the carrying on a complex system with the utmost advantages to all the pupils concerned.³¹

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

³⁰ *Report of the Board of Education, 1888-1889*, pp. 3ff

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

After this preamble the board presented its regulations regarding Union Schools and Normal sessions therein, including both under the same heading: *Provisional regulation with respect to Union Schools. Adopted March 14, 1889.*³²

The question arises, however, as to why the board regulated *for one* professional curriculum and *one* set of required textbooks, even though provisionally and tentatively. There is nothing to indicate that the *only* conclusion to draw from the board's action is that the board had no intention of extending the dual system into the normal school. It seems equally reasonable to conclude, since the Board admitted to its inexperience in this area, and since it stressed that its regulations were only provisional, that its action merely shows that it did not wish to make elaborate permanent regulations which might later prove difficult to alter. By keeping the initial regulations simplified and unified the Board was, in effect, providing for much flexibility and facility for future adaptation of regulations – regulations that would be more pertinent to, and adequate for, the schools of each section. This could involve two different sets of regulations regarding certain areas of curriculum and texts.

Furthermore, no Catholic Union school was in existence at the time of this report of the Board of Education, September 17, 1889. Regina and Calgary had Union Public schools established “since the summer vacation” of 1889, which means the fall of 1889, and Lacombe, the first Catholic Separate Union School, was established within the term of 1889-1890.³³ The possibility of its having a normal session so soon after its establishment was quite improbable. The Catholic members of the Board may have felt that under such circumstances there was no point in opposing a set of provisional *regulations* regarding curriculum and texts which would be put into operation and used first in the normal sessions of public Protestant Union schools of Regina and Moosomin. Furthermore, since normal school departments were to develop within Union schools, the Catholic section had, therefore, no reason to believe, or fear, that when such time for the establishment of normal departments in Catholic Union schools arrived, its rights would be denied.

The only work undertaken in accordance with the March 14, 1889, resolution of the Board “of which any official record exists was done by Mr. A.H. Smith, B.A., principal of the Moosomin Union School, who in addition to his other work delivered a series of lectures, on the science and art of teaching to a number of students who had obtained second and third class

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-10.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

non-professional certificates. This voluntary course ended April 8, 1890.³⁴ It must be noted that this session was *not authorized* by the Board of Education, nor was it carried out by an “Inspector of Schools for the District.” The first *authorized* Normal sessions were given by the Board at Regina and Moosomin schools beginning in the fall of 1890.³⁵ An *invitation* was sent out to all teachers in the Assiniboia area to attend these Normal Sessions proposed by the Board. The resolution embodying this invitation read:

Resolved: that a Normal department be established at the Regina and Moosomin Union Schools, to be conducted in each case by the Inspector of Schools for the District, the first session to open on the first Monday in November, and that all teachers in each of these Districts who hold nonprofessional certificates and desire to teach be invited to attend the session held in their District.

That, with regard to the holders of non-professional certificates in other Inspectoral Districts, whenever there are ten such, who desire to receive Normal training in any Union School, the Board will endeavor to arrange for a Normal Session being held in such school.³⁶

In addition to being non-professional certificate holders, these “invited” teachers were teaching in East and West Assiniboia Inspectoral Districts only. The resolution did not affect teachers of any other part of the Territories. It must be remembered that there were two sets of inspectors for East and West Assiniboia: the Protestant and the Catholic set. In 1890 Mr. J. Hewgill and Mr. Wm. Rothwell were the inspectors for the schools of the Protestant sections of East and West Assiniboia respectively. They subsequently conducted the Normal sessions in the Protestant section Union schools of Moosomin and Regina. Mr. Hewgill trained six candidates at Moosomin in 1890-91; Mr. Rothwell conducted the first session at Regina in 1892. Since the inspectors of the Protestant sections conducted the Normal session in the Protestant Union schools, and since in 1889-90 there were 86 Protestant schools, as compared to seven Roman Catholic schools in the combined East and West Assiniboia districts, this may indeed be an indication that the board’s invitation of September 1890, was primarily directed to the Protestant teachers teaching in East and West Assiniboia schools of the Protestant section.

³⁴ *Report of Council of Public Instruction 1896*, p. 16.

³⁵ *Report of Board of Education 1889-1890*, p. 7.

³⁶ *Loc. cit.*

By the winter term 1889-90 there were 27 schools in West Assiniboia under the Acting-Inspector Patillo, 59 in East Assiniboia under Inspector Hewgill, and seven Catholic schools under the inspectorship of Rev. D. Gilles and Rev. D. Gratton.³⁷ Since both public and separate schools of the Catholic section were grouped together under Rev. D. Gilles' and Rev. D. Gratton's list, it can be presumed that those in Patillo's and Hewgill's lists were Protestant schools. There was certainly a predominance of Protestant schools in the area by 1890 when the Normal session invitations were made. If the board had the immediate professional training of the larger group of Protestant section teachers in mind, then the fact of one curriculum and one set of texts did not really affect the Catholic minority of that area; nor was there any reason for the Catholic section of the Board to oppose the first provisional Normal school regulations. This could also indicate that the idea for *one* system past high school was not really entertained by the whole board, for as it seems, the implementation of the 1888 regulations would be occurring in Protestant section schools only. The Catholic schools of the Territories were concentrated in the Alberta and Saskatchewan Districts, not in Assiniboia. Let us not overlook Forget's remarks made to the Standing Committee of the North-West Legislative Assembly regarding this Normal session to be held in Regina and Moosomin:

When by way of trial, the Board, with the consent of the Catholic section, passed a regulation for the establishment of a Normal session, obligatory in Assiniboia only, they resolved not to extend this obligation to Saskatchewan and Alberta.³⁸

To my mind this clearly indicates the Board's thinking on the matter since the established schools in the Assiniboia area were predominately Protestant at the time, the Protestants should be the ones to give the first Normal sessions in *their* Union public schools. However, it does not preclude that when the time came for Normal sessions in predominately Catholic areas that the Catholics would have this same privilege. My thesis is that the Board was thinking primarily in terms of the Protestant majority of teachers in the Assiniboia area.

The lack of funds may also have been a significant factor influencing the Board's resolution. In his letter to Archbishop Taché concerning the Board's resolution of September, 1890, Father Leduc wrote:

³⁷ *Report of Board of Education 1889-1890*, p. 90.

³⁸ *Canada Statistical Record, 1886, P395* (Archives of Saskatchewan).

After two days of discussion we have come to the following conclusions regarding future certificates and normal schools:

Not having any funds for the maintenance of these schools, the Board of Education orders the two Protestant inspectors from Assiniboia who each have a salary of nearly \$2,000, to open a session of normal school from November to March in Regina and in Moosomin, in the public schools of these two localities. The teachers holding non-professional certificates *are invited* to go to these sessions, otherwise they will have to teach three years and have favorable reports from their respective inspectors before obtaining professional certificates. The other localities already having "Union Schools" and who wish *at their own expense* to establish a normal school department, will make their request to the Board of Education (which under these conditions will probably not be overburdened with applications).³⁹

The Board's lack of funds, and the concentration of teacher population in the Protestant schools of East and West Assiniboia, were probably the main considerations that caused the Board to authorize the first Normal sessions in Moosomin and Regina. That the Board was consciously aiming to establish by this resolution a unitary system for all the Territories beyond the high school seems quite improbable.

The subsequent "invitational" Normal sessions were quite unsuccessful, for no student enrolled in Regina, and only six attended Inspector Hewgill's classes for third class professional certificates at Moosomin in the fall of 1890. In the following year, 1891, neither centre held classes. In the early part of 1892 sessions were conducted at Regina by Inspector Rothwell, and at Moosomin by Inspector Hewgill.^{40 38} Candidates continued to be few while attendance was voluntary at the Normal sessions.

On December 31, 1892, largely on the initiative of Haultain, the Board of Education was replaced by the Council of Public Instruction. The new Council was composed of the four-man Executive Committee of the Legislature, and four other members two Protestants and two Catholics, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. These last four members held advisory positions only, and had no vote.⁴¹ A two-man quorum was required for the Council of Public Instruction. In April, 1893, D. J. Goggin, who had

³⁹ *Leduc to Taché, September 12, 1890* (Archives of Archbishop. St. Boniface).

⁴⁰ *Report of Council of Public Instruction, 1896*, pp. 16-17.

⁴¹ *Ordinances of the N.W.T. 1892*, no. 22, s. 5.

previously been principal of the Normal School in Winnipeg, was appointed Director of Normal Schools, and in December 1893, he was appointed Superintendent of Education. Goggin was opposed to denominationalism in education. On August 10, 1893, Haultain and James Neff of Moosomin (composing the quorum) declared that a “non-professional certificate shall not be valid as a license to teach.”⁴² Furthermore, certificates issued in Manitoba or Ontario could be exchanged for “equal standing” Territorial certificates, while certificates from the other provinces, the British Isles, or from “institutions other than those mentioned” would be exchanged for certificates which the council of Public Instruction deemed equitable.⁴³

In effect, the regulations of August, 1893, made teacher training compulsory. The Catholic minority became alarmed over this and over the prospect of the Legislative Assembly considering the repeal of the “endorsement” clause of the September 10, 1890 regulation which allowed the granting of first and second class professional certificates to anyone who passed the required examination and held “a Normal School Diploma or the Inspector’s endorsements approved by the Board of three years’ successful teaching.”⁴⁴ If Normal sessions became the *only* way for teachers to procure a professional certificate, it would create an extreme hardship particularly for the teaching sisters in the Territories, who because of canonical regulations would not be able to attend Normal sessions outside their convents. It also meant that if the sisters’ certificates would not be valid licenses for teaching (many of them had non-professional certificates), the minority faced not only a shortage of teachers, but perhaps the necessity of closing some of its schools. From 1893-1896 the teacher certification and related Normal school controversy was vigorously debated. In November 1893, the minority sent a petition to the Governor-General in Council petitioning that the 1892 Ordinance, no. 22, be disallowed, in view of the fact that “no provision is made in the said ordinance for Catholic separate normal schools, and text-books prescribed for use in the normal schools are open to the same objections as are hereinbefore made to the text-books prescribed for use in the ordinary schools for children.”⁴⁵ On February 15, 1894, the Secretary of State, John Costigan, sent the following letter to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Territories:

I am now to inform you that his excellency in Council regrets that the

⁴² *Report of the Council of Public Instruction*, 1896, p. 17.

⁴³ “Regulations of the Council of Public Instruction Governing Teachers’ Certificates, 1894.” Sessional paper no. 40c, *Canada Sessional Papers 1894*, Vol. XXVII, 17, p. 196.

⁴⁴ *Report of Board of Education 1889-90*, p. 8.

⁴⁵ *Canada Sessional Papers*, Vol. XXVII, 17, 40c, p. 3.

changes made in the ordinance relating to education should have been such as to cause, even unwittingly, dissatisfaction and alarm on the part of the petitioners, and I am to urgently request that the complaints set forth by them be carefully enquired into, and the whole subject be reviewed by the executive committee and the North-West Assembly in order that redress be given by such amending ordinances or amending regulations as may be found necessary to meet any grievances or any well-founded apprehensions which may be ascertained to exist.⁴⁶

The whole question of the interpretation of the 1888 and 1889 regulations of the Board of Education regarding Normal departments in Union schools, professional curriculum, and textbooks, continued to be the central issue of the ensuing debate. Haultain took the position that the earlier resolutions were supported by the minority itself thus fostering the belief that the intent of the whole Board, in 1888, 1889, and 1890 was that dualism in education would not be extended beyond the high school. Furthermore, the minority itself after these resolutions were passed, did not avail itself of establishing its own Normal school sessions prior to 1893. The Catholic Union school in Calgary had existed since 1889, but no Normal school sessions had been conducted there. By the fall of 1894 the Territorial government continued to refuse the right to the minority to license and certify its own teachers. However, the School Committee, which had been set up by the Territorial Government to study the Privy Council's report requesting redress, declared that in view of the "peculiar circumstances" of the teaching sisters, the Council of Public Instruction may well handle the request for Catholic Normal sessions by allowing the sisters to teach with non-professional certificates until six candidates were available for third class professional certificates at Moosomin, Prince Albert, or Edmonton, and for second class certificates at Regina and Calgary. This suggestion was made in terms of an earlier resolution put forth by H. Mitchell (Mitchell) and F. E. Wilkins (Red Deer). The suggestion, however, was defeated.⁴⁷ If the suggestion had been passed it would have given extra time for the minority to reassess its forces, and perhaps to begin its own Normal sessions.

Goggin, then proposed a Normal session in the public school at Calgary which, he suggested, could be attended by the Catholic teachers including the Sisters. Father Leduc insisted however that the Normal sessions for the sisters would have to be in the convent, and only on the "condition that" the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴⁷ *Assembly Journals, 1894*, pp. 81-130.

instructor would “always conduct himself like a gentleman.”⁴⁸ A few years later, in 1897, Bishop Legal, still very much in contact with Haultain about the matter of the Normal school stated that he was appreciative of the fact that the government was at that later date willing to hold a special session “in some of our convents,” whenever six sisters, or six sisters and/or lay women teachers were ready for such sessions. However, he pointed out to Haultain that Catholic teachers required Catholic Normal schools since the Church was reluctant to allow the minority’s teachers “to listen to the more or less sound theories which [would] be expounded by those whom it [would] please the government to appoint” ... “from time to time [the government] could exact an examination on pedagogical principles,” and the Government inspectors would see how well the teachers thus trained in Catholic Normal sessions put these pedagogical principles into practice.⁴⁹ By the end of 1898, Legal felt that Haultain was willing to approve of a sister, or sisters, as Normal school instructor(s), with the power to grant certificates. Sister Greene, principal of the Lacombe Roman Catholic Union School seemed to be the logical person for appointment to the post of Normal school principal. Besides having had teacher training in her own order of Sisters, Sister Greene possessed a first-class professional certificate. According to the regulation of March 14, 1889 the principal of a Union School

shall be a graduate of some University in Her Majesty’s Dominions, or have attainments which, in the opinion of the Board of Education, are equivalent thereto, and must also be able to satisfy the Board as to his knowledge and ability to conduct such a school, and to train teachers according to the most approved methods of teaching.⁵⁰

The fact that Sister Greene was accepted by the Board of Education as a principal of a Union School in 1889, a post which she held for the years following, indicated that her qualifications (which included her teacher training in convents of her own order of sisters) must have been considered by the Board as equivalent to that of “graduate of some University in Her Majesty’s Dominions,” and that she was considered professionally qualified as to her “knowledge and ability to conduct such a school, and to train teachers according to the most approved methods of teaching.” In fact, in the listing of

⁴⁸ Letter of Leduc to Taché, September 17, 1893 (Archives of Archbishop of St. Boniface).

⁴⁹ Legal to Haultain, January 8, 1898 (Archives of Archbishop, St. Boniface).

⁵⁰ *Report to Board of Education, 1888-1890*, pp. 4-5.

schools and teachers in Appendix 1, pg. IX, of the *Report of the Board of Education 1890-91*, Sister Greene is identified as holding a university degree: “Sister Mary Greene B.A.” Furthermore, the Inspector’s report of June 18, 1891, attests to Sister Greene’s competence:

The very varied and comprehensive course of studies in the teachers’ department which has been taken up by the principal of the school are pursued with a vigor and a zeal that bear excellent results and testify marks of superior training and show the foresight and deep interest manifested by the Board of Education in having these High Schools as a part of the Union School System. I am happy to state excellent results.

General tone – excellent.⁵¹

Although there is no evidence of a Normal session having been held in Lacombe Union School prior to the 1893 effort of the minority to establish the right, it seems strange that in view of the above position held by Sister Greene, and in view of her qualifications, that the Council of Public Instruction refused in the years following the 1892 ordinance to allow her to conduct such a session. It seems doubly strange in view of the fact that the same Council concurred with the former Board of Education in acknowledging her training as being equivalent to a B.A.⁵² Before it would grant the right to have a Normal school session under the principalship of Sister Greene the Council demanded proof from the minority that Sister Greene, or any other sister who would be in charge of the Normal session, had held successful Normal sessions elsewhere.⁵³ This new requirement appeared to exclude Sister Greene. This stipulation of the Council seems somewhat rigid and harsh, since some of the early Normal sessions were conducted by inspectors, at least one of whom, John Hewgill, did not have a degree.

Catholics then turned to the major superior in Paris of the Faithful Companions of Jesus and requested that an experienced nun be sent from their convent in England to be in charge of a Catholic Normal school in the Territories.⁵⁴ The community however felt that Sister Greene’s qualifications would have to suffice, and could not comply with the request of sending

⁵¹ *Report of Board of Education 1890-1891*, Appendix III, p. 131.

⁵² *Report of Council of Public Instruction, 1891*, p. 93.

⁵³ Langevin to Granin, March 11, 1899 (Archives of Archbishop of Edmonton).

⁵⁴ Letter Grandin to Sr. Girod, March 24, 1899 (Archives of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Edmonton).

another sister. Other attempts to locate an experienced and qualified Normal school principal also met with failure. In the end the minority had to accept the fact that the dual principle of control would indeed not be restored.

After 1903 the Normal school question was superseded in the legislature by the struggle for provincial autonomy. A deaf ear was given to further requests by the minority. For the Catholics of the North-West Territories, the loss of a Catholic Normal school was a hard blow. It meant that potential teachers from local Catholic high schools would not be professionally trained along Catholic principles of education. To continue to bring in religious and lay teachers trained outside the territories became more costly and difficult after 1892 since outside certificates were often given only probationary or temporary validity. Teachers from Quebec often had a language difficulty where instruction in English was required. The prospect of a teacher shortage meant that the Catholic separate school system would cease to expand. What was worst of all, the concept of adequate education for Catholics would have to be compromised.

Although it looks on the surface that the minority lost its right to a Catholic Normal school because of its failure to comply with requests of the Council of Public instruction to provide an experienced and qualified Normal school principal it is hoped that this paper has brought to light factors which indicate that it was practically impossible for the minority to establish its own Normal sessions regardless whether it has qualified personnel or not. Among these factors, Haultain's own opposition to anything Catholic in education seems to have been a most powerful factor after 1887.

I would like to end this paper with part of Haultain's defence of the 1892 Ordinance, which he gave on behalf of the Executive committee of the North-West Territories:

The religious complexion of the school is a domestic matter, which concerns the ratepayers establishing such schools. [The dual system would involve] two courses of studies, two standards of teachers, two sets of inspectors, two sets of normal schools, two superintendents and government grants based on different standards. ...

Granted the right of Roman Catholic inspection and Roman Catholic management and control, the further necessity will arise for Roman Catholic assembly to make ordinances for the government of Roman Catholic schools, and a Roman Catholic Lieutenant-governor to assent to such legislation, and a Roman Catholic Governor-general to allow the law to come into operation, on the advice of a Roman Catholic council, possessing the confidence of a Roman Catholic House of Commons.

The responsibility for the general management of four schools, for the educational policy of the Territories, and for the expenditure of the school vote is above and beyond any sectarian differences. Expenditure and control are inseparable, and so long as schools continue to receive government grants, they must be subject to government control.⁵⁵

Haultain was indeed in no way ready to accede to the minority by restoring even partially the dual system established in 1884 and abolished in 1892.

⁵⁵ *Sessional Papers of Canada, 1894*, Vol. XXVII, 40c, p. 14.