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THE FRENCH-CANADIAN PRESS IN SHERBROOKE  
AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT 1861-1881

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## A B S T R A C T

### THE FRENCH-CANADIAN PRESS IN SHERBROOKE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT 1861-1881

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This paper examines the reactions of the local French-Canadian press to an era of rapid industrial growth in the city of Sherbrooke between 1861-1881. The analysis pays special attention to the stand of the press on the question of industrial development as a solution to the evils of French Canadian emigration to the United States during this period. Historians of French Canada usually concede that solutions to the problem of XIX<sup>th</sup> Century French emigration had been perceived within the confines of a strict agrarian ideology. This paper, by its very nature tests this concept but, more importantly, seeks to establish the importance the press attributed to the role of industrial development as a possible deterrent to emigration.

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The whole question of French Canadian emigration to the United States during the last half of the nineteenth century has provided historians with a wide spectrum for research. Traditional theories have pointed to such internal problems as soil exhaustion, overpopulation, scanty harvests, and the lack of scientific farming<sup>1</sup> as the prime motivating factors behind emigration. The consequences of these migrations, on the other hand, still offer the students of immigrant history a number of new avenues to investigate. One such area of research deals with the relationship between ideology, on one hand, and social/economic change on the other.

These migrations, which according to some historians, originated as early as 1837, had caused a considerable degree of anxiety to both the Roman Catholic Church and the secular authorities. The clergy, fearing for both the spiritual and material well-being of their parishioners, outrightly condemned this exodus to the manufacturing centers of New England. The city was often identified with vice and corruption. According to priests, the individual, exposed at length to urban society rapidly lost sight of moral precepts as "l'insécurité, le travail énervant, la promiscuité, la dissipation sapent les forces physiques et morales de l'homme."<sup>2</sup> The clergy constantly reminded the French Canadian that his

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<sup>1</sup>Canadian historians of French Canada such as M. Wade, A. Faucher, M. Brunet, J. Hamelin have all examined at some length the causes of French Canadian emigration to the U.S., however, the most exhaustive and scholarly study effected in this area remains F. Ouellet's book, Histoire économique et sociale du Québec, 1760-1850.

<sup>2</sup>J. Hamelin, Yves Roby, Histoire économique du Québec 1851-1896 (Montréal: Fides, 1971), p.170.

occupational destiny lay in agriculture not industry. On one hand, agriculture displayed everything that was good and pure on this earth - integrity, honour, inner tranquillity; while on the other, it formed the basis of a nation's prosperity by shielding the individual against economic crises. Above all, however, farming occupied a place of prominence in God's plan for man. It was man's most natural state of existence and ultimately the chosen occupation for the fulfilment of the work of God in America and the realisation of the vocation of the French Canadian race.

As the tide of emigration continued to swell, the clergy rapidly brought pressure to bear on the political representatives in an effort to effectively halt this dépeuplement des campagnes. The solution to the problem appeared to abide in various colonisation schemes which were designed to develop much of the unsettled lands of Quebec. Colonisation societies were organized in 1848 to answer this need, yet insurmountable obstacles hampered any effective implementation of these schemes. A good deal of the evidence for this agrarian ideology can be found in the various government reports which dealt with emigration between 1849 and 1893.

The Chauvreau Report of 1849 recognized that the failure to settle these lands, especially the vast tracts contained in the Eastern Townships, was due to the lack of adequate roads which made access and internal communication difficult if not impossible. Albert Faucher in his book Québec en Amérique au XIX siècle stated that the Chauvreau commission was emphatic as to the importance of roads; "il en fait une

condition de la colonisation et du progrès agricole."<sup>1</sup> The Report stated:

Votre comité croit donc que le remède le plus urgent est la confection de chemins pour relier les régions agricoles de la province aux nouvelles régions de colonisation, notamment les Cantons de l'Est et permettre aux colons de communiquer entre eux.<sup>2</sup>

In 1851 an investigation was launched and a special committee appointed to "inquire into the causes which retard the settlement of the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada" (1851 report by the Special Committee appointed to inquire into the causes which prevent or retard the settlement of the Eastern Townships in the districts of Three Rivers, St. Francis, and Quebec.) This study resulted in two reports and once again pointed to the need of better communications: "The main things that it (government) should do though, would be to improve the means of communication."<sup>3</sup> Agriculture was termed "a new country's most certain source of happiness" and the "Legislature was bound by every means in its power to raise the farmer from his present adversity."<sup>4</sup>

The solutions advocated for attracting French Canadian settlers to the vast marginal lands of the Eastern Townships had failed despite certain government attempts to open up new land and to improve accessibility.<sup>5</sup> In 1857 another special committee was organized to report to

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<sup>1</sup>A. Faucher, Québec en Amérique au XIX siècle (Montréal: Fides, 1970), p.200.

<sup>2</sup>RAPPORT CHATELAIN cited in A. Faucher, Québec . . . p.200.

<sup>3</sup>M. Down "1851 Report of the special committee of the Legislative Assembly on Immigration from Canada East to the United States." Unpub. MSS., History 623, Professor R. Burns (Montreal: Concordia University) p.3.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Clergy reserves opened, 1854; 1855:\$300,000 pour l'établissement des terres vacantes; 1854-55: 755 1/2 miles of new road opened, 224 miles of old road repaired (1857 Report in paper by M. Down.)

the Legislative Assembly on emigration from Canada East to the United States. The Dufresne Report, as it was called, revealed the same inherent problems as had existed in 1851 - primarily roads, communication and lack of government aid. Indeed in 1857 it was still advocated that colonization was the only real solution to the evil of emigration which was a "public calamity to be deplored and if possible to be averted."<sup>1</sup> There existed "plenty of land around for settling the increased population of this agricultural society."<sup>2</sup>

Given the fact that a good number of French Canadians during this period appeared to forsake agriculture for industry where guaranteed wages and security prevailed, it becomes imperative to examine at this time where industrial progress and employment stood in relation to the various investigations and their conclusions. According to Faucher, the Chauveau Report was the least moralistic and the most realistic of all the reports. At least the question of industrial development was not ignored. On the question of tariffs and manufacturing the Report stated that "d'importantes modifications dans ce but on été faites et acceptées au projet de tarif . . . ." A certain confidence in the future of the province was equally expressed as

le Bas Canada, par ses avantages naturels, est destiné ainsi que les États du nord américain, à devenir un grand pays manufacturier, à qui serait propre à retenir dans ce pays les bras et les capitaux qui s'en éloignent.<sup>3</sup>

Successive reports did not share this optimism.

The 1851 Report on the topic of industry said little of "manu-

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<sup>1</sup>M. Down, "1851 Report . . ." Unpub. MSS., p.2

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p.4.

<sup>3</sup>A. Faucher, Rapport Chauveau as cited in Québec . . . p.198.

facturing because the assumption persisted that Agriculture was the all-prevailing road to success and what little industry would develop would be a natural result of fulfilling basic needs for agriculture."<sup>1</sup>

The Dufresne Report reflected the same opinion ; emphasis centered around the "spiritual value inherent to agriculture."<sup>2</sup> The Dufresne Committee was not ignorant of manufacturing needs in the country and urged the promotion of factories to secure employment. Any further deliberations on this topic, however, were deemed untimely; hence, "concluding remarks were limited to a brief consideration of a protective tariff for home products that were easily fabricated."<sup>3</sup>

After examining the secondary literature, one is faced with the conclusion that both the clergy and State perceived the problem of emigration within the framework of an agrarian ideology which strictly favored colonisation as the solution. Furthermore, this ideology seemed to predominate throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. For example, the Chicoine Report of 1893 still regarded the original vocation of the Québécois as agriculturalist:

C'est l'homme déchu qui émigre en ville. . . 'au dire des économistes qui ont étudié le phénomène avec attention cette cause résulte du désir irrésistible qu'éprouve l'homme déchu pour tâcher d'améliorer son sort.'<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this paper then is to test the existence of an agrarian ideology by examining The French Canadian press of the City of

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<sup>1</sup>M. Down, "1851 Report . . . ." Unpub. MSS., p.5.

<sup>2</sup>A. Faucher, Rapport Chauveau as cited in Québec . . . . p.190.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p.199.

<sup>4</sup>A. Faucher, Rapport Chicoine (Doc. sess., Québec:1893, vol.27, Am.I) as cited in Québec . . . . p.159.

Sherbrooke between 1866 and 1881. as Sherbrooke, during this period, experienced both large settlement growth and industrial development.

The City of Sherbrooke did not emerge overnight as an industrial center capable of securing employment for disillusioned French Canadian habitants desirous of entering industrial occupations. Yet, industry was not something novel to the city. As early as the mid 1840's "Sherbrooke had well established wood"<sup>1</sup> and "flannel industries."<sup>2</sup> The real impetus to industrial development, however, did not occur until the coming of the railroads in 1852. The completion of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad in 1853, with one of its main terminals in Sherbrooke, provided the city direct access for its goods to both Canadian and American markets. According to Hamelin the railroads enhanced settlement and were directly responsible for the establishment of "two sawmills in Sherbrooke in 1852 and instrumental in attracting industrialists to the region."<sup>3</sup>

The industrial activity generated by the advent of the railroads is well illustrated in the Canadian Directory of 1857. Despite a relatively small population of 3,000 the city nevertheless housed some 17 factories which included:

- a brick and stove manufacturer, a grist mill, paper mill, saw mill and pulp factory, a sleigh and carriage maker, crackers, bread and cakes confectionery, a clothing and dye manufacturer, two axe factories, a sash, blind and door maker, a book store, and two shoemakers, an iron foundry, a harness and cabinet maker. . . .

Thirteen prominent citizens were engaged as either merchants or storekeepers.

In effect, by applying a thesis announced by Jacob Spelt in his book, Urban Development in South Central Ontario, one concludes that

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<sup>1</sup>J. Hamelin, Y. Roby, Histoire Economique . . . . , trans. J. McKecher, p. 265.  
<sup>2</sup>Dominion Illustrated (Montreal: 1890), p. 16.  
<sup>3</sup>J. Hamelin, Y. Roby, Histoire Economique . . . . , trans. J. McKecher, p. 138.  
<sup>4</sup>Canadian Directory of 1857.



Sherbrooke, by 1857, was both the central place in the region and was entitled to be considered a full-fledged town. Spelt stressed transportation facilities and administrative functions as imperative in assessing the importance of a settlement. Sherbrooke was indeed well endowed in this respect as the Grand Trunk Railway and daily stage service to various points outside the town guaranteed growth. Furthermore, the "courts of law for the District, the Registry Office for the county and the chief office in Canada of the British American Land Company"<sup>1</sup> were all located in the town. Politically, the town "was an electoral district, returning one member to the Provincial Parliament."<sup>2</sup> Sherbrooke also fulfilled Spelt's four other requirements (other than the existence of service industries) that were deemed necessary before a settlement was to be accredited as a full-fledged town, namely, representation from the legal, medical, financial and media professions. The Canadian Directory for Sherbrooke listed 15 people engaged in legal professions, three doctors, a bank called the City Bank, and two weekly newspapers, The Canadian Times, and The Gazette.<sup>3</sup>

Within two years, by 1859, the general prosperity of the city and region had necessitated the establishment of another bank: "the financial requirements of the townships had become such that there could be no further delay without serious damage to business of every kind."<sup>4</sup> The opening of the Eastern Townships Bank in 1859, with its Head Office in

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Directory of 1857. <sup>2</sup> Ibid. <sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> V. Rose, History of the Bank of Commerce, vol. 1, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1920), p. 362.

Sherbrooke, simply illustrated "a stage of advancement in the region which called for the creation of some financial machinery."<sup>1</sup> Within the next eight years the Bank's activity in the area of loans and assets increased from \$286,270 in assets to \$623,195, and in loans from \$179,006 to \$454,972, increases of 117% and 154.1% respectively.

By 1867 industrial development in the region and Sherbrooke had progressed to the point of exciting comment. The Annual Report of the Eastern Townships Bank for that year stated the following:

The directors see with pleasure the gradual development of manufacturing industries through the country established, as they believe, on a sound basis. In the townships of Sherbrooke, Coaticook and Danville . . . , a spirit of enterprise seems to have shown itself in a more marked fashion than at any other time.<sup>2</sup>

This spirit of enterprise most certainly had an effect upon the population structure of the city. Unfortunately, documentation illustrating population distribution for this particular period was rather sparse. According to the Public Archives of Canada the 1861 Manuscript Census for the City of Sherbrooke was unavailable. The 1861 Aggregate Census, which does not distinguish between urban and rural, provided the only insight into demographic structure as the Sherbrooke County census figures established the county's population at 5,899 with an ethnic breakdown of some 1,419 French Canadians and 4,480 people of English speaking descent or others.

In the decade that followed, French Canadians began to settle in Sherbrooke in large numbers. A French weekly newspaper was founded

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<sup>1</sup>V. Rose, *HISTORY OF THE . . .*, p. 376.

<sup>2</sup>Eastern Townships Bank, *ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1867* (Sherbrooke), p. 72.

in 1866. Le Pionnier, as it was called, professed to be "un journal politique, agricole, industriel, commercial, de science et d'annonces"<sup>1</sup> and 'politically' conservative. The editors and owners, H.C. Cabana and L.C. Belanger were both lawyers and devoted to the repatriation of their compatriotes exilés in the United States.

L.C. Belanger, the eldest son in a family of twelve children, had been born at Rapide Plat, about seven miles below the City of St. Hyacinthe.<sup>2</sup> Two of his brothers had taken up residence in Worcester, Mass., and edited a leading French newspaper in New England, namely, La Courier de Worcester. H.C. Cabana, on the other hand, descended from a wealthy farming family in the parish of Vercheres, located on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, about thirty miles from Montreal.<sup>3</sup>

The reaction of Le Pionnier to the industrial progress of Sherbrooke was, at the outset, low-keyed. Between 1866 and 1868 the solution to French Canadian emigration was envisaged as dependent upon the realisation of various colonisation schemes proposed by the government and clergy. Nearly every publication of the paper kept readers abreast of developments in that area. The editors felt that this question was too vital an issue to ignore:

nous voulons y revenir souvent; parce que c'est notre goût: que nous pensons comprendre la nécessité de tenir cette question sans cesse devant les yeux du public et que nous avons grandement à coeur l'établissement des terres magnifiques qu'il reste à défricher et à peupler.<sup>4</sup>

According to Cabana and Belanger the lack of interest in settling

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<sup>1</sup> Le Pionnier. (Sherbrooke), 1866.

<sup>2</sup> G.M. Rose, A Cyclopedic of Canadian Biography (Toronto: Rose Publishing, 1888), p.673. Vol.1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.602

<sup>4</sup> Le Pionnier. (Sherbrooke), 17 avril 1868.

the newly opened territories in the Townships stemmed from the small number of "chemins à lisses"<sup>1</sup> in the region and the lack of adequate information available to prospective settlers: "l'une des causes qui paralyse le plus la colonisation, c'est le manque de renseignements sur les Cantons de l'Est."<sup>2</sup> Appeals were launched by the press inviting people to write in to the paper "dans le but de fournir des renseignements aussi complets que possible sur les Cantons de l'Est."<sup>3</sup>

It was impressed upon the readers that correspondence on this matter was "un point d'honneur et de patriotisme."<sup>4</sup> Subsequent issues carried numerous letters to the editor covering a variety of topics ranging from the geographical attributes of the Townships to proper soil and farm management.

This emphasis on colonisation did not mean that the topic of industrial development was totally ignored during this period. In fact two articles appearing in the January and February issues of the paper provided the first and detailed survey of the manufacturing strength of Sherbrooke. Figures related to productivity, employment and wages and annual returns on investments were provided for most of the nineteen industries mentioned in the articles. It was noted that the larger industries such as Paton Manufacturing, La Carrière H.R. Beckett, Beckett & Company Match Factory, Angus Logan Paper Company, La moulin à scie British American Land, and La filature Lomas "employed 180, 50, 40, 38, 35, and 28 people respectively."<sup>5</sup> However, Le Pionnier made no

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 26 janvier 1867.

reference to the manufacturing potential of these factories as a solution to the problem of emigration.

Even the opening of an axe factory by a fellow French Canadian did not arouse enough sentiment although "la plupart des employés actuellement dans la manufacture sont des compatriotes que son établissement a fait revenir de l'exil des Etats-Unis."<sup>1</sup> This enterprise, Le Pionnier felt, was indeed a noble effort and demonstrated that:

l'esprit d'initiative est loin d'être endormi parmi nous; nous l'avons cultivé et il nous a bien servi; il nous a donné la jolie aisance, la prospérité assez enviable qui nous favorise en ce moment.<sup>2</sup>

The faith of Le Pionnier in colonisation as a deterrent to emigration was not shaken until a project which called for the construction of a railroad to traverse "une partie d'Ascot, Eaton, Bury et Lingwick"<sup>2</sup> was abandoned in 1869. Throughout the summer of the previous year Le Pionnier had already expressed a very definite sense of disgust over the blatant procrastination exhibited by the government in carrying out colonisation plans. The new railroad project promised to redress former grievances and quickly aroused a good deal of enthusiasm. Railroad construction was considered a valuable remedy for emigration as "le colon qui avoisine une voie ferrée, durant l'hiver, est sûr de l'ouvrage dans les moulins ou manufactures qui bordent ce chemin."<sup>3</sup>

The newspaper felt exalted at the fact that finally enterprising individuals were now seeking new options to encourage and aid colonisation as most of the previous efforts

tentés par des particuliers, par différents sociétés et par le gouvernement même . . . pour induire nos nationaux

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 3 août 1867.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., 10 juillet 1868.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 17 avril 1868.

à prendre la route de la forêt . . . ont produit quelques résultats, mais sont tous loin d'avoir en tout l'effet désiré.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, this railroad plan did not materialize due to financial complications and would not be completed for many years to come. The question asked was simple "mais quand les ressources permettront-ils de le faire?"<sup>2</sup> An alternative was even provided "au lieu, qu'un chemin de bois pourrait être construit dans une couple d'années",<sup>3</sup> yet, subsequent issues mentioned little on either roads or railroad. It was at this point that the topic shifted to industrial development and the need for protection.

Early in 1869 industry and its function in Canadian society became the focal point of many editorials. The opinion that the promotion of industry was instrumental as a deterrent to emigration also started to receive wide publicity. In fact this point of view over the next three years was to become more and more pronounced as the press enthusiastically proclaimed the benefits inherent to industrial development. In early 1869 it already realistically affirmed that:

tout le monde ne saurait être agriculteur, pas plus ici qu'ailleurs, et il est évident que nous sommes destinés à nous livrer à l'industrie jusqu'à un certain point; la nature de notre sol et notre position géographique, notre climat et nos habitudes en sont une bonne preuve.<sup>4</sup>

A degree of protection was also imperative in a young country such as Canada as it would encourage capitalists to build factories and "donneront plus de ressources à celles qui existent déjà."<sup>5</sup> Effective

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 17 avril 1868.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., 10 juillet 1868.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 28 mai 1869.    <sup>5</sup>Ibid.

and prompt implementation of such a policy guaranteed permanent employment for "notre peuple, à des avantages plus avantageuses qu'à l'étranger, et cela dans la patrie même . . . c'est là, croyons-nous que se trouverait le remède à l'émigration."<sup>1</sup> This feeling found expression in subsequent issues pertaining to protection and its effect.

As time progressed the degree of conviction that the French press of Sherbrooke displayed over the importance of industrial development was, on more than one occasion, openly illustrated in written confrontations regarding divergences of opinion. In a reply to an Arthabaska paper which stated that protection created a monopoly detrimental to both producer and consumer, Le Pionnier flatly discounted any such nonsense by citing the example of a cheese factory in a nearby town which benefited all parties concerned, farmer, factory owner, and consumer. Protection would only strengthen this already healthy relationship and further enhance the prosperity of such an enterprise, hence

si nous avions, par suite des bienfaits de la protection, une abondance de manufacturiers du genre de celles que nous allons parler, les cultivateurs n'auraient pas à se plaindre après tout . . . donc en avant nos manufactures!<sup>2</sup>

There can be little doubt at this point that Le Pionnier did not have exclusive rights to the opinion that industrial development constituted the answer to the problem of emigration. In an article dated October 1, 1869, a Sherbrooke manufacturer, L.I. Boivin, wrote a lengthy letter to the editor entitled "Quelques considerations sur notre industrie manufacturière. Filature de coton; moyens à prendre pour en avoir une." The essence of his argument lay in the fact that the city

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 28 mai 1869.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 24 décembre 1869.

of Sherbrooke possessed all the features deemed necessary for it to become, in the not too distant future "une grande ville industrielle."<sup>1</sup> The city's waterpower, accessibility to markets and availability of manpower were to be utilized to the fullest. Boivin reviewed the various industrial establishments of the city, one of which, the Paton Manufacturing, being compared to the "établissements du même genre de Lowell ou du Lawrence."<sup>2</sup>

Monsieur Boivin considered the results of his investigations self-explanatory. More than 959 people were directly employed in the various industrial establishments of the city, not to mention a score of others "qui en retirent des avantages sans cependant être attachés à aucun établissement."<sup>3</sup> Hence, the erection of new industries, especially a cotton mill, depended upon "l'énergie et l'esprit d'entreprise"<sup>4</sup> of its citizens and would serve to enhance the prosperous industrial entrepreneurship already so prevalent in the city. Boivin presented an elaborate scheme for the financing of such a project and concluded by reminding the French populace that this mill would secure employment for some "250 à 300 personnes . . . que l'on pourrait faire revenir des Etats-Unis."<sup>5</sup> The English press also drew attention to Boivin's scheme. An article written by a citizen wholeheartedly agreed with Boivin's proposal as

this plan will answer our wants in all respects . . . as everyone praised the value and acknowledged the value derived from the one destroyed by fire in 1865.<sup>6</sup>

Within a year the shift from an agrarian ideology to an industrial outlook as a prime factor in retaining French Canadians in the country

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 1 octobre 1869.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid.    <sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Sherbrooke Gazette & Eastern Townships Advertiser, Oct. 9, 1869.



appeared complete. In fact it is not too pretentious to state that Le Pionnier was progressively being carried away by a mounting frenzy of enthusiasm for industrialization. Even the appointment of a missionary priest for repatriation purposes along with certain successful ventures by the Société de colonisation de St. Hyacinth failed to excite the press. Colonisation was still a noble effort and indeed these societies, if adequately financed and allowed to continue in this manner would prove to be an effective way "de ralentir l'émigration et de favoriser la colonisation de nos terres"<sup>1</sup>, yet, the importance of industries could no longer be ignored as they were needed "afin de créer de l'ouvrage à nos populations, en temps d'hiver surtout."<sup>2</sup> The creation of employment opportunities for the French Canadian people was essential to the "bien-être et prospérité" of the French nation, thus, "le moyen de lui en donner (de l'ouvrage), c'est d'établir des manufactures."<sup>3</sup>

This feeling found expression at the local level as an association called L'Association des pouvoirs d'eau de Sherbrooke had been recently created "dans le but d'ériger des bâtisses convenables pour les fins manufacturières." This enterprise, in the eyes of Le Pionnier was "une source de prospérité pour ses habitants (Sherbrooke)."<sup>4</sup> Many French Canadians were prominent among its promoters, a factor which aroused a definite sense of pride:

nous félicitons de tout coeur les promoteurs de l'entreprise, parmi lesquels nous sommes fiers de voir figurer plusieurs canadiens-français, et nous leurs souhaitons les plus grands succès.<sup>5</sup>

As the British American Land Company who owned the land along the Magog River was disposed and willing to sell "n'importe quel pouvoir d'eau sur

<sup>1</sup>Le Pionnier, 27 mai, 1870.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. <sup>3</sup>Ibid., 4 fév. 1867.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 16 septembre, 1870.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

le Magog à des conditions libérales . . ." and that these buildings once completed, would be rented "à quiconque désirera s'en servir pour des fins manufacturières"<sup>1</sup>. Le Pionnier in concluding moralized "Ayons des manufactures et nous prospérerons, nos frères émigrés nous reviendront et l'émigration étrangère se dirigera vers nos plages."<sup>2</sup>

The newspaper continued to ride the crest of this wave of enthusiasm well into 1871 and openly condemned opponents of industrialization schemes. Early in the year French Canadians were asked to put themselves "à la hauteur de la situation" by supporting a new industrial project involving "la puissante compagnie de Cornwall"<sup>3</sup> which had displayed an interest in opening operations in Sherbrooke. This factory promised to employ "deux à 300 familles"; hence, given this factor, coupled with the advantages Sherbrooke offered as a main terminal on the Grand Trunk line, the prospect of the city becoming, in the near future, "l'une des principaux centres de la province et la capitale véritable des Cantons de l'Est"<sup>4</sup> was no longer a remote possibility.

The scheme, unfortunately, fell through only to be replaced immediately by another project advanced by the same promoter, Mr. Stephens, which called for the extension of the Paton Manufacturing Mill. This mill, since its founding in 1866, had been the hub of industrial activity in the city. Its employment and output figures as early as 1867 had been 180 people employed and \$300,000 in yearly production.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid.    <sup>3</sup> Ibid., 27 janvier 1871.    <sup>4</sup> Ibid.

By 1871 the Paton Manufacturing Mill along with two other textile mills, M. Lomas and Foss and Grindrod, grossed more than \$570,000 annually. It was noted at this time that "quel dommage qu'il n'y ait pas une demi-douzaine comme celles-ci dans toutes nos petites villes! L'émigration aux Etats-Unis diminuerait à vue d'oeil."<sup>1</sup> Thus, any extension of an important industry such as Paton inevitably aroused keen interest.

In respect to the Paton extension project Le Pionnier urged the French-Canadian population of the city to attend the public meeting called on this matter and emphatically warned readers that any divergence of opinion on this topic was intolerable. The matter was clear-cut as it was an opportunity

fort propice pour l'avancement de nos intérêts matériels: il nous faut des manufactures en ce pays pour retenir notre population, et y attirer des immigrants. Or, rappelons-nous que cette source de prospérité est doublement avantageuse aux localités qui ont la chance de la posséder. Profitons-en, à l'assemblée.<sup>2</sup>

The paper attentively followed the proceedings of the public meeting and took pleasure in reporting that "ce projet est partout accueilli avec faveur."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, it counselled the people to heed the advice issued by the Member of Parliament for neighbouring Compton County, John Henry Pope. Pope, soon to be "sworn in a member of the Privy Council and made minister of agriculture,"<sup>4</sup> under the Macdonald Government, had been closely linked to the city's progress as a Director of the Eastern Townships Bank and one of the original promoters of the Paton Mill. Hence, in pushing this extension project,

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 5 mai 1871. <sup>2</sup>Ibid. <sup>3</sup>Ibid., 19 mai 1871.

<sup>4</sup>G.M. Rose, A Cyclopaedia of . . . , pp. 650-651. Vol. 2

he had expounded on the importance of manufacturing as a "moyen de créer de l'ouvrage à notre peuple . . . à ceux qui ne se sentent points de dispositions à l'agriculture . . . et d'arrêter l'émigration qui nous dévore."<sup>1</sup> This opportunity, urged Pope, must be seized immediately, otherwise "nos enfants auraient un jour raison de se lever en jugement contre nous et de rapprocher notre apathie et indifférence."<sup>2</sup>

Le Pionnier felt that industrialisation would guarantee both the future of Sherbrooke and that of the French Canadian.<sup>3</sup> The industrial movement could no longer be contained<sup>4</sup> and the manufacturers of Sherbrooke, given both financial and community support, were destined to make the city into "Le Lowell du Canada."<sup>5</sup>

There can be little doubt that the French Canadian citizens of Sherbrooke shared the view of the press on the importance of industry vis-a-vis employment and emigration. Le Pionnier never failed to remind its readers of public meetings called to discuss potential industrial projects. Subsequent issues carried very detailed accounts of the proceedings. The attendance was always described as large and "très enthousiaste pour recevoir le rapport du Comité . . ."<sup>6</sup> Motions to accept the final proposal worked out between the city and factory owner were always accepted unanimously ". . . au milieu des plus vifs applaudissements."<sup>7</sup> Dissenting opinions held no sway at these meetings. The newspaper felt no need to comment on the few dissenters as "leurs paroles restèrent sans effet."<sup>8</sup> Hence, it was generally accepted that Sherbrooke's most prominent citizens, some of them French, had initiated this era of prosperity and Le Pionnier gladly reported that "tous ses

<sup>1</sup>Le Pionnier, (Sherbrooke), 19 mai 1871.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 2 juin 1871.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

habitants les aident de leur appui et de leur concours.<sup>1</sup> The ultimate result of this esprit d'entreprise was to effectively elevate the city, once the Paton project would be completed, to the rank of "premier parmi les villes manufacturières de ce pays."<sup>2</sup> The essence of the matter, however, lay not solely upon the material benefits inherent in Sherbrooke's prosperity, but more importantly, the example set by its citizens. The government could not be entirely blamed for the evils of emigration: "la faute, c'est à nous."<sup>3</sup> The solution rested upon an

esprit d'initiative . . . . Du moment que l'on verra que les manufactures sont destinées à devenir l'une des principales sources de la prospérité de cette province, les capitalistes y tourneront leurs regards et leur succès sera assuré.<sup>4</sup>

Capitalistic enterprise in a town or city was dependent upon the encouragement and support of the populace. Sherbrooke had successfully demonstrated the potential and benefits derived from active participation in industrialization schemes. Should this conviction and esprit d'initiative be applied throughout the province, the results would be no less than spectacular:

La population augmentera par l'immigration, au lieu de diminuer par l'émigration . . . . Alors, nous n'aurons point à envier le sort matériel de nos voisins: le peuple trouvera ici de l'ouvrage en tout temps de l'année, et il restera au pays.<sup>5</sup>

By 1872 La Fionnière felt satisfied that industrial development had taken place. In effect, in 1871 the Eastern Townships Bank in its Annual Report stated that Sherbrooke due to its "great advances during

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.<sup>2</sup>Ibid.<sup>3</sup>Ibid.<sup>4</sup>Ibid.<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

the past few years and the immediate prospect of increased manufacturing enterprise on a solid basis and on a large scale was "destined to shortly become the most important seat of manufacturing outside the city of Montreal."<sup>1</sup>

The Paton Manufacturing, whose "mills resembled little manufacturing towns in themselves" was already considered "the largest in the Dominion of Canada."<sup>2</sup> The yearly production figures, once construction terminated, were estimated to range from \$500,000 to \$600,000 per annum,<sup>3</sup> thus requiring the employment of some 500 hands. Other local manufacturers also had made their mark in the Canadian economic scene. The textile mills of A. Lomas and A.L. Grindrod and Company, due to the quality of the merchandise produced, had an "established reputation in the market."<sup>4</sup> The paper mills of Angus Logan and Company, which produced more than "three tons of paper per day" were described as carrying on an "extensive business."<sup>5</sup>

The population and employment opportunities in the city had both shown healthy rates of growth. By 1871 the city's population had reached 4,417 people (according to the Manuscript Census, 1871), an increase of 1,840 since 1851.<sup>6</sup> Sherbrooke ranked sixth provincially in size after

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<sup>1</sup>Eastern Townships Bank, Annual Report 1871 (Sherbrooke).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. <sup>3</sup>Ibid. <sup>4</sup>Ibid. <sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>The Public Archives of Canada have acknowledged that the section of the city located in Orford Township was missing. Research has revealed that the missing residents possibly totalled 421 people, most of whom were, in all probability, prominent English citizens, residing in the North Ward which was located in Orford Township. The 1851 Cadastra de la ville de Sherbrooke which unfortunately is in deplorable state, nevertheless revealed a surveyed yet largely unsettled area for that section of the Town. Many properties in Orford Township were owned by such eminent citizens as A.T. Galt, High Commissioner for the British Amer. Land Co.; G.F. Bowen, High Constable & future mayor of Sherbrooke; E.F. Felton, Public Notary; C. Witcher, Surveyor; Eleazar Clarke, Revenue Inspector. Subsequent cadastras esp. that of 1863 showed the North Ward as predominantly occupied by English speaking residents. The French milieu of the city appeared to be concentrated in the commercial & industrial section of the city which was entirely located in Ascot Township.

Montreal, Quebec, Three Rivers, Levis, and Sorel. But this growth was not due to significant increases in the English segments of the population. In fact judging from the Manuscript Census of 1851 and 1871, the English speaking section excluding the Irish and Scotch elements<sup>1</sup> had actually dropped in the twenty year period, possibly by 232. (Table 1).

TABLE I  
CITY OF SHERBROOKE  
TOTAL ETHNIC POPULATION 1851 - 1871.

Ethnic Group	1851	1871
French Canadian	465	2266
English	1190	958
Irish	798	693
Scots	114	429
Other	10	71
Totals	2577	4417

Both the Scottish and Irish elements, on the other hand, which for both census had retained their respective ethnic classification, also displayed changes. It appeared that the Irish population decreased substantially over the twenty year period by possibly as much as 105, whereas, the Scottish element increased by 315. (Table I above).

<sup>1</sup>In the 1851 Manuscript Census, people formerly from England, the U.S. and British Canadians were classified in the final tabulation with these individual classifications. The 1871 Manuscript Census, on the other hand, classified all the former as English under the origins column yet distinctions were possible as another column provided the Place of Birth.

The most noteworthy change demographically related with the French Canadian representation in the city. Since 1851 the French inhabitants had greatly risen. According to the data available, the French Canadian population had risen by 1801 which represented a 387.3% increase over twenty years. In 1871 Sherbrooke was over half French (51.3%). (Refer Table I). This demographic change also entailed changes at the occupational level. French Canadians held the lion's share of jobs in the industrial, domestic and non-classified fields with virtually no other ethnic group even approximating their numbers in these areas. In effect, the 1851 and 1871 Manuscript Census simply demonstrated that the Canadian took advantage of the industrial progress of the city. By 1871 more than 323 French Canadians were employed in industry in Sherbrooke, an increase of 244 or 308% over 1851. (Refer Table II).

T A B L E II

CITY OF SHERBROOKE  
A COMPARISON OF THE ETHNIC  
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
1851 - 1871

Occup.	F/C		Eng.		Irish		Scots		Other	
	1851	1871	1851	1871	1851	1871	1851	1871	1851	1871
Ind'l	79	323	107	124	45	109	14	79	..	3
Comm'l	3	37	33	69	10	29	5	27	..	..
Prof'l	5	20	32	36	3	10	2	11	1	2
Dom.	23	101	58	27	74	45	10	16	..	3
N.C.	94	286	105	38	428	63	33	24	..	2
Agr.	6	6	26	11	10	13	4	..	..	..



In the non-classified sector where occupations especially that of labourer may be closely linked with the industrial progress of the city, French Canadians figured prominently despite an overall reduction of some 247 jobs in the field. Between 1851 and 1871 the non-classified occupations previously held by Irish, English, and Scots had declined by 365, 67 and 9, whereas French Canadian participation in this sector rose sharply by 192. (Refer Table II).

The emphasis of the press on the need of industrial development to thwart French Canadian emigration and secure full-time employment appeared to wane substantially between 1872 and 1874. The decline, however, was noticeable at the level of insensitivity not substance. The few articles published on the topic of industry during these years were aimed at further consolidating a reading public's conviction of the importance of industry by illustrating the material benefits offered by manufacturing. In reaction to a lecture delivered at the request of the Paton Manufacturing by Professor Goldwyn Smith, Le Pionnier remarked that "les capitalistes de Sherbrooke se sont montrés les amis de l'ouvrier."<sup>1</sup> Smith had denounced the use of illegal strikes acts of violence and labour demagogues in disputes between labour and management. The paper was quick to remind workers that:

la condition prospère de ses ouvriers (Paton) que l'on voit de tous côtés acquérir des terres et des maisons, placer de l'argent à la banque, fait voir qu'ils n'ont à se plaindre de rien . . . .

Proper management of the employment benefits offered by manufacturing industries such as Paton was imperative. No abuses could be tolerated as employers were but seeking to elevate workers "dans l'échelle sociale:— tout en demandant d'eux en retour l'accomplissement

<sup>1</sup>Le Pionnier, (Sherbrooke), 22 novembre 1872. <sup>2</sup>Ibid.

entier, juste et libérale de leur devoir."<sup>1</sup> This theme found expression in another article evaluating the city's progress in the area of housing.

The press remarked:

Chose remarquable à l'exception de quelques bâtisses dans la partie commerciale de la ville et de quelques résidences privées . . . la plupart de ces améliorations et constructions appartiennent à des artisans et à des ouvriers. Cela démontre l'importance des manufactures déjà établies comme contribuant à notre prospérité.<sup>2</sup>

Industrial education also assumed a place of prominence as a promoter of employment security and advancement. Unfortunately the French enrolment at l'Ecole des Arts et Manufactures (opened since January, 1874) was exceedingly low -- a mere three French Canadian students out of a student body of thirty. A greater French presence in an institution of this nature could have created positive repercussions throughout "toutes les classes de notre petite société."<sup>3</sup>

Consequently, given the general prosperity of the city and the increases in both the French population and the Canadien's leaning towards industry, and to a lesser extent non-classified occupations, it was quite conceivable that the press, by the year 1872, no longer felt the need to continuously proclaim the advantages inherent to industrialization -- Sherbrooke's future as an important manufacturing center seemed secure. French Canadians, according to the 1871 Manuscript Census, actively partook in the employment opportunities generated by industry. Hence, the local press had succeeded in its conversion scheme;

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<sup>1</sup> Le Pionnier, (Sherbrooke), 29 novembre 1872. <sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 6 février 1874.

the sole task remaining was to act as the conscience of the people by reminding them at intervals of the gratitude owed the patrons of industry by the simple fulfilment of an honest day's work as the latter sought only the social uplifting and welfare of their employees.

Sherbrooke's industrial boom and accompanying prosperity soon suffered a serious setback as the world depression of 1873 hit the city in the fall of 1875. Unfortunately, for the duration of the depression, namely between 1875 and 1878, little documentation exists to enable one to accurately assess the intensity of the crisis and its full effect on the city. Le Pionnier had apparently continued to publish as research has revealed some 59 editions, most of which were not legible; any further publications beyond this number appear to be non-existent. The only indication of the city's reaction to the depression was found in the English paper, The Sherbrooke News, and another French local Le Progrès de l'Est both of which were owned and operated by the same proprietors, L.A. and L.C. Belanger.

In 1874 L.C. Belanger, due to a dispute of a political nature with H.C. Cabana of Le Pionnier, broke away from the latter to join in a partnership with a brother L.A. Belanger thus founding a new French newspaper Le Progrès de l'Est while at the same time purchasing and managing an established English publication, The Sherbrooke News. Both publications survived until 1878 at which time they were sold to La Compagnie Typographique des Cantons de l'Est.

Judging from the evidence contained in both papers, the depression struck especially hard at the manufacturing sector of the city's economy. Le Progrès de l'Est reported a series of work slowdowns by some

of Sherbrooke's larger manufacturers, especially Paton and Lomas. By September, 1875, Paton had decided "de suspendre ses travaux pendant quelque temps"<sup>1</sup> only to resume operations two months later in November with the work week reduced to three days. Lomas, as well, suspended operations for two months to reopen only in January, 1876.

The new year brought an intensification of the economic strife occasioned by the depression. The press reported an acceleration in plant slowdowns; in fact, by mid-year, Paton and another important local industry, La Compagnie des Viandes et Produits Alimentaires had closed their mills "pour un congé indéterminé."<sup>2</sup>

The resumption of operations by the Paton Mills was marked by a 20% reduction in wages. La Compagnie des Viandes et Produits Alimentaires, despite the optimism of the press that the company "va se remettre à l'oeuvre le premier de septembre"<sup>3</sup> did not reopen and in November of the same year fire entirely destroyed the premises of this establishment thus depriving a large number of persons of employment.

The year 1877 brought the city a degree of temporary relief. By the fall La Compagnie des Viandes et Produits Alimentaires had been rebuilt and actively resumed operation "on tue 40-50 pièces de bétails par jour."<sup>4</sup>

Both Paton and Lomas had entered a renewed era of prosperity "qui fait espérer le retour de la bonne fortune."<sup>5</sup> Paton with more than three months in back orders to fill even entertained the possibil-

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<sup>1</sup> La Progrès de l'Est, (Sherbrooke), 11 septembre 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 30 juin 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 24 août 1876.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., décembre 1877.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

ity of a ten cent wage hike "on dit qu'il est question d'élever les salaires de 10¢ dans ce vaste établissement."<sup>1</sup> Lomas as well was operating at full strength and "peut à peine suffire aux commandes."<sup>2</sup>

This optimism soon suffered a serious setback as within two months a strike by 150 employees of the Paton Mills over the possibility of a 10% reduction in wages threatened to disrupt operations. "Heureusement, qu'un arrangement a été fait et que les grévistes se sont remis à l'ouvrage dans l'après-midi."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, in the same month La Compagnie des Viandes et Produits Alimentaires closed its doors with the prospect of reopening only when "la quantité de ses produits actuels sera réduite."<sup>4</sup>

Throughout this whole period, Le Progrès de l'Est had assumed a low-keyed stance in its assessment of the financial crisis; yet a faint perceptible change appeared to be surfacing. In an article dated 2 novembre 1877, and entitled, "Le signe du temps", the question of the city's decreasing population figures was rationalized in a most interesting manner. Sherbrooke, as illustrated in Graph, page 28, had in fact experienced a considerable decline in population since 1875. Hence, in assessing the problem, the newspaper rejoiced in the fact that most of the families that had left Sherbrooke "sont retournées dans les compagnies d'où elles s'étaient éloignées ces années dernières."<sup>5</sup>

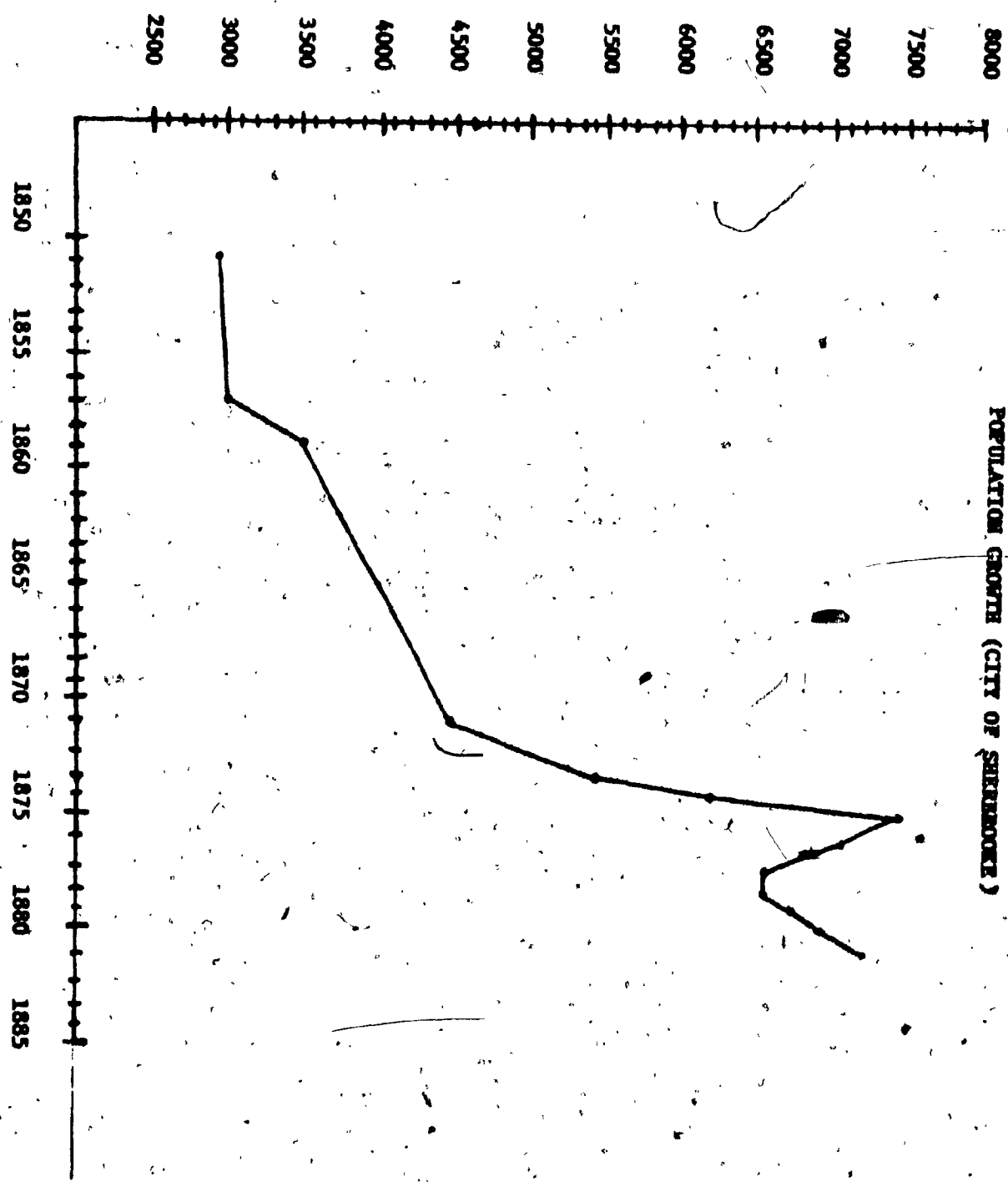
The depression had thus served a valuable purpose:

elle fournira à l'agriculture et à la colonisation des sujets qui s'étaient portés vers les villes dans l'espoir d'y trouver un emploi facile et rémunérateur.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., 8 février 1878.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 2 novembre 1877.    <sup>6</sup>Ibid.

POPULATION GROWTH (CITY OF SHEPPORTE)



These individuals had been blinded by the chimeric visions offered by urban employment. A movement back to the country had commenced and it was felt that once all individuals capable of good honest hard work turned their attention to the newly created townships and a life centered around agriculture then the great problem "du meilleur remède à apporter à l'émigration de nos compatriotes serait enfin résolu."<sup>1</sup> The press optimistically concluded that this depression "aura peut-être l'effet de produire la panacée qui devra guérir ce grand mal."<sup>2</sup>

Any further assessment of the newspaper's stand on the question of the effects of the depression was impossible to gauge as Le Progrès de l'Est ceased publication in April, 1878, and became the property of the Compagnie Typographique des Cantons de l'Est. Both Le Pionnier and Le Progrès de l'Est were amalgamated. Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke, as it was now called, was once more the sole French newspaper in the city. Both L.C. Belanger and H.C. Cabana had been retained in the capacity of contributors as they now chose to further pursue their respective careers in Law.

The format of the newly created paper had changed considerably as had its contents. The coverage offered by the paper was extensive as it became more internationally oriented, often reporting and following very carefully events occurring in Europe and the United States. The most noticeable change, however, lay in its approach to the question of industrial development and colonization. It was not only to share the view previously held by Le Progrès de l'Est as regards the effects of the depression, but its very reaction to the depression itself took on a much

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<sup>1</sup> ibid.

<sup>2</sup> ibid.

more pronounced tone.

Between 1878 and 1882 it became blatantly obvious that the press no longer treated the question of industrialization in the same vigorous manner as it had previously. Progress in the area of industrial entrepreneurship no longer received the enthusiastic ovation it once had. The prospect of expansions by the Lomas, Smith-Elkins and Paton Mills in 1879 failed to raise any excitement, even though the Paton project promised to create ". . . de l'ouvrage pour une soixante de personnes de plus qu'auparavant."<sup>1</sup>

In reality, as time progressed, industrial employment increasingly received negative reviews. Industry had snatched the woman from her rightful place in the home and family "en lui permettant de prendre le fardeau de l'ouvrier et d'enlever à celui-ci la bonne moitié des débris du travail que le progrès de la mécanique lui faisait dans l'industrie."<sup>2</sup> This tendency was considered le mal du siècle. Women were not only degrading themselves by entering industrial occupations and depriving agriculture of "une partie considerable de ses bras les plus vigoureux,"<sup>3</sup> but more importantly, they threatened the very employment security of qualified personnel in industry.

Unrestrained industrial development was another serious problem ". . . on a laissé l'industrie s'emparer de la main-d'oeuvre, l'arracher aux travaux des champs et l'entasser dans les villes d'une manière non proportionnée aux besoins du pays."<sup>4</sup> By 1880 this theme had taken a giant step forward; industry had become "le plus mortel ennemi de la société" yet, emigration to industrial centers persisted;

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<sup>1</sup> Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke, 11 juillet 1877.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 6 décembre 1878. <sup>3</sup> Ibid. <sup>4</sup> Ibid. <sup>5</sup> Ibid., 3 octobre 1879.



chaque jour . . . nous assistons à un spectacle navrant; nous voyons nos belles, nos fertiles campagnes abandonnées par leurs habitants que, méprisant la vie des champs et sa douce indépendance, s'en vont se mettre au service des capitalistes des villes et y grossir le nombre des mercenaires.<sup>1</sup>

Industry offered no security "on ne songe pas qu'une guerre, une révolution, une crise financière peuvent d'un moment paralyser l'industrie et jeter sur le pavé cette classe ouvrière."<sup>2</sup> The continuous influx of workers to these centers was bound to produce disastrous effects. The demand for work soon reached a saturation point; hence, a decrease in wages followed accompanied ultimately by "le malaise, les grèves et les maux qu'ils entraînent."<sup>3</sup>

The answer to these problems was simple and implementable at two levels. First, Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke realized that the presence of industry was un fait accompli, unavoidable and to a degree nécessaire. Precautionary measures, however, were imperative. On one hand, tariff protection for both old and new industries was necessary. The paper offered no argument on this point. The Lomas, Smith-Elkins and Paton building projects were envisaged as a precursor of the forthcoming federal government's protection, "la protection est à nos portes."<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, the essence of the issue related more particularly to the future. Strict caution in promoting industrial development was counselled. The financial crisis at the time had been occasioned by an unparalleled era of prosperity especially in the United States and to a lesser degree in Canada. John A. Macdonald's National Policy was bound to revive the economy and "nous forcer de créer notre propre industrie." The prime factor to remember in this respect was "l'excès . . . la fièvre

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 27 février 1880.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 7 mars; 12 mars; 11 juillet 1879.

des entreprises."<sup>1</sup> Certain restrictive policies regulating the development of industry were now mandatory.

Another precautionary measure was the protection of the worker himself against cheap and temporary labour. The press felt that the number of industrial workers was to be effectively limited by various apprenticeship programmes. A five year programme would rid industry of the presence of women who entertained no serious intentions "de faire de cet emploi son occupation pour la vie."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, it discouraged many people who simply sought "un travail facile et remuneratif" and thus left the craftsman "le domaine du travail industriel qui lui appartient."<sup>3</sup> Regulations requiring an apprenticeship period, entrance examinations and ultimately a diploma would provide job security and lessen competition from people "qui laisse la charrue au detriment de l'agriculture . . . pour aller gâter le métier de l'ouvrier."<sup>4</sup>

The other solution to the problem was even simpler and better suited both materially and spiritually to the nature of the French Canadian "restons donc fidèles au sol."<sup>5</sup> This theme, identical to the agrarian ideology cited in the secondary sources at the beginning of this paper, started to increasingly receive wider publicity in Le Pionnier. According to the paper Scriptures had proven that agriculture was destined to be man's occupation - "l'homme fut destiné pour cultiver la terre."<sup>6</sup> The French race owed the preservation of its culture and national identity to agriculture:

si notre race s'est conservée aussi intacte sous la domination d'un élément étranger, nous en sommes

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., 6 décembre 1878.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 17 décembre 1880.    <sup>5</sup>Ibid., 23 avril 1880.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 27 février 1880.

redevables au fait que nos pères continuèrent comme leurs devanciers, à s'attacher au sol, à défricher et cultiver la terre.<sup>1</sup>

Industrial employment completely ignored all these factors; machines could not replace an honest hard day's work in the fields which was so conducive to "la santé du corps, trop favorable au développement des facultés intellectuelles et trop intimement liés à la moralité des mœurs . . . ." <sup>2</sup>

The industrial worker lived from day to day in constant fear of strikes, wage reductions or depressions, whereas the farmer continuously reaped the harvest of his labour. His farm provided substance for both him and his family and guaranteed independence of action by making him "maître de la position." This feature comprised "la seule richesse honnête qu'il y ait au monde."<sup>3</sup>

By 1880 Le Piconnier de Sherbrooke felt confident enough to state that "l'agriculture commence déjà à être rémunératrice" and with this prospect in mind it urged French Canadians to remain "fidèles au sol, fidèles à la plus noble de toutes les occupations, les travaux des champs."<sup>4</sup>

The renewed interest and concern for agricultural employment was unquestionably due to the depression and the insecurity prevalent in industrial occupations. To this, however, must be added other factors. According to Hamelin, by the mid seventies, the depression and the lack of work in the republic had caused the return of many

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. <sup>2</sup>Ibid., 10 octobre 1879. <sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 23 avril 1879.

émigrés to the province. The government "listened attentively to those who returned" and sought measures to attract many who desired to return but were unable to do so due to "poverty, family affiliations or relocation problems."<sup>1</sup>

The result of the investigations culminated in the repatriation scheme of 1875. The programme called for the setting aside for repatriation purposes of three townships in the southeastern part of the Eastern Townships. The Townships of Emberton, Ditton, and Chesham (refer Map of Eastern Townships) officially acquired the name of La colonie du rapatriement in 1875 and were designed to enhance by land grants "le retour au pays natal des Canadiens émigrés aux États-Unis."<sup>2</sup>

The Révérend Père J.B. Chartier, a colonization priest, was appointed to the administration of the colony. Settlement rapidly got underway. By 1879 progress in the colony had been made to the extent that Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke exclaimed that the colony had developed "avec une rapidité inouïe" and was unsurpassed "dans les annales de la colonisation de notre province."<sup>3</sup> From this point on, the journal carried extensive articles illustrating the entire history of the colonisation scheme. To drive home the importance and success of the programme, many articles furnished statistical census returns on the progress of these townships.

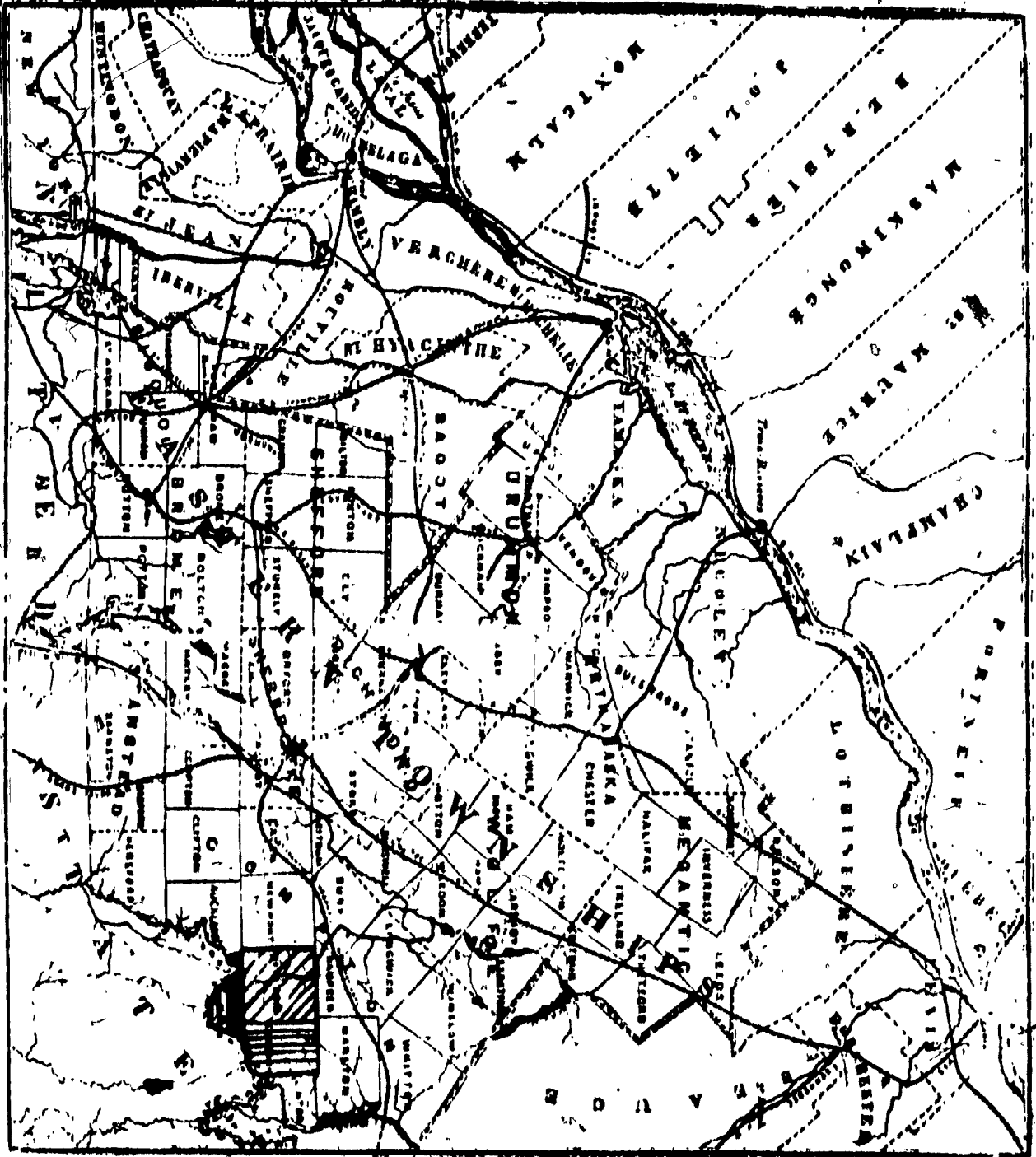
At the outset only Ditton had managed to attract any significant number of repatriated French Canadians numbering some 74 individuals (25 avril 1880, Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke). However, within a year, all

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<sup>1</sup>M. Lee Hansen, Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), p. 170.

<sup>2</sup>Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke, 28 février 1879. <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

MAP OF THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS.



Ditton  
  
Chesam  
  
Emberton  
  
Sherbrooke

three townships had shown marked increases. Ditton's number of repatriated Canadians had risen by 424, Emberton's by 70, and Chesham's by 288.

TABLE III  
COLONIE DE REPATRIEMENT

Colonie	Habit. de La PROV.		Europe		Candns. Repatriés	
	1875	1876	1875	1876	1875	1876
Ditton	110	372	124	99	74	498
Emberton	.	240	8	12	.	70
Chesham	6	320	.	27	1	289

In all, the colony had attracted a total of 857 Canadian 'exiles'. Consequently, colonization, according to La Pionnier, had succeeded where industry had failed as the farmer, in time of crises, could always derive from his farm "sa propre subsistance et celle de sa famille . . .".<sup>1</sup>

There existed as well another influence, namely the clergy, which may have been responsible for the reorientation of the press back to agriculture and away from industry. Although the basis of this assessment tended to be speculative as documentary evidence in this area appears to be poor, nevertheless, La Pionnier's tone on religious matters suggested more than a passing influence by the clergy on the nature of the articles. The vocabulary, the emotional and religious appeals and the moral precepts contained in many of the issues imploring French Canadians

<sup>1</sup> La Pionnier de Sherbrooke, 10 octobre 1879.

to return to the soil were permeated by a style highly characteristic of French clerical writing. Some articles alluded to scriptural passages designed to convince the Canadian of his part in the Divine Plan of God on earth, while others cautioned that the neglect of a nation's teachings and precepts led to chastisement and social disorders.<sup>1</sup>

From 1878 on, the newspaper carried at length all the important sermons preached by Bishop Racine of Sherbrooke and carefully reviewed many of his pastoral visits. Although it is impossible to assess the influence that Bishop Racine may have had on the editorial staff of the paper, nevertheless, given the facts that the Monsignor had been politically active in the early colonisation schemes<sup>2</sup> and by 1883 had founded La Société de Colonisation de Sherbrooke, there appears the definite possibility that Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke was more receptive to the clerical message.

By 1881 the city's economic picture appeared to be improving considerably. A series of new railroad lines completed during the late 1870's provided Sherbrooke with "unrivalled railroad facilities,"<sup>3</sup> with direct outlets to markets located in Portland, Boston, Quebec City, and Saint John, New Brunswick.<sup>4</sup> According to Hamelin by 1881,

<sup>1</sup> Le Pionnier de Sherbrooke, 7 janvier 1881, trans. J. McKercher.

<sup>2</sup> Mgr. Racine had directed the investigations effected in 1851 by twelve missionaries on the causes which prevented or retarded the settlements of the Eastern Townships in the districts of Three Rivers, St. Francis and Quebec. The Monsignor also helped pass "une loi par laquelle toutes les terres incultes des grands propriétaires contribueraient à l'entretien des chemins."

<sup>3</sup> Balding Atlas, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> In 1881, Sherbrooke was a terminal on the following railroad lines: Grand Trunk, Montreal-Sherbrooke-Portland (North - South); Massawippi Valley

Sherbrooke produced 1.50% of all manufactured goods in the province and ranked fourth provincially after the manufacturing centers of Montreal, Quebec, and Hull which supplied respectively 50%, 9.3%, and 1.76%.<sup>1</sup> The Census report for 1881 was equally encouraging. It established the city's population at 7,227, a figure which denoted a gradual yet steady increase of 655 in the population of Sherbrooke since 1878 (Refer to graph). In fact, since 1871, both the French and English segments of the population had risen substantially. The French Canadian population, which stood at 2,226 in 1871, had reached 3,957 in 1881, a marked increase of 1,691 or 74.6%. The English, Irish, and Scottish representation within the city had also risen by 816, 106, and 183 over the same period of time (Table IV). Hence, given these factors, it seemed that complete recovery and renewed prosperity for the city was but a matter of time and sound management planning.

T A B L E I V  
P O P U L A T I O N O F S H E R B R O O K E 1 8 7 1 - 1 8 8 1

	1871	1881
French Canadian	2266	3957
English	958	1774
Irish	693	799
Scotch	429	612
Others	71	85
TOTALS	4417	7227

Railroad (Sherbrooke-Boston); the Quebec Central Railroad (Sherbrooke - Quebec City); The International East (Sherbrooke-Lac Megantic-Saint John, New Brunswick.)

<sup>1</sup>J. Hamelin, Y. Roby, *Histoire économique* . . . . . trans. J. McKecher, p. 298



In conclusion, as the limits of this paper are confined to 1881, we have seen how the solutions to the question of French Canadian emigration usually perceived in agrarian terms were certainly not static but fluctuated according to the economic atmosphere of the country. A study of the French Canadian press of the city of Sherbrooke has served to illustrate that an era of industrial development and prosperity occasioned a change in ideological outlook. During the late 1860's and early 1870's, an era of rapid industrial growth for the city, the French press, disillusioned by the progress of colonization schemes, focused its attention on industrial development as a more efficient method of retaining French Canadians at home, and of repatriating those who had left. The depression and its subsequent effects on the economy of Sherbrooke, and also its growth, soon revived the appeal for colonization and agricultural schemes as a more suitable and effective answer to the emigrant problem. Whether or not, this theory applied to subsequent years remains unanswered. Nevertheless, a quick perusal of the French media for 1882 reveals a series of articles aimed at a weekly examination of the manufacturing enterprises operating in the city of Sherbrooke. The editor, Emile Pingault, personally toured the establishments, and offered a few negative remarks on the working conditions of some of the factories, yet, in general, his reactions denoted a certain sense of pride in the industrial accomplishments of the city.

Since these articles published in 1882 on the following dates: 23 février, 2 mars, 9 mars, 23 mars, 30 mars, 13 avril, 7 juin, 23 juin, and entitled, A travers Sherbrooke, offered the first instance since the depression whereby an attempt was made to approach and assess the in-

dustrial potential of the city, the question naturally raised pertains to the very thesis of this paper.

By 1881-82 "a new boom had hit the infant economy of Canada."<sup>1</sup> The eighties were to witness a "tremendous increase in the industrial life of North America."<sup>2</sup> Hence, would the French press once again gradually return to the view that it had previously held in the late '60's and early '70's? Unfortunately, at this time only further research or a doctoral thesis could conclusively supply an adequate answer.

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<sup>1</sup>D. French, Faith, Sympathy and Politics (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1962), p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

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