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The 1866 Election in New Brunswick: The Anglin-Rogers Controversy

THE CONFEDERATION ELECTIONS IN NEW BRUNSWICK have long been of interest to historians of Atlantic Canada. While a thoroughgoing social scientific analysis of these elections remains to be undertaken, it is clear that the intensity of the elections was very high. Evidence to support this assertion is varied, ranging from the large amount of energy expended on drawing up electoral lists, of campaign coverage in the newspapers, of money expended, of religious animosity aroused, of travel and speech-making by prominent politicians, to the appeal of one minor offender to the court for consideration because his views on Confederation coincided with those of the judge, and to the violent death of a man as a result of an altercation allegedly caused by political differences over Confederation. The documents which follow provide further evidence of the ardency of the struggle for they bear witness to a vociferous debate between two leading Catholics in the colony, Timothy Anglin, editor of the Saint John *Morning Freeman*, and James Rogers, Bishop of Chatham. While the dispute sheds light on various aspects of New Brunswick politics it is particularly instructive on the type, temperament and views of Catholic leaders during the 1866 election.

WILLIAM M. BAKER

The controversy began with Bishop Rogers' favourable response to Edward Williston's request for electoral support in the Northumberland election. In enunciating his approval of Confederation Rogers placed greatest emphasis on the fact that the British Government had recommended the Union.

But is this a strong reason in its favour? — Certainly. It is under present circumstances the strongest *prima facie* evidence of its benefit that could be produced. Why? Because these parties...are in a position to be the very best judges of its merits. They are...deeply interested in the welfare of their Colonial Empire. England's greatness hitherto has been caused by, nay, I might almost say consisted in, the extent and success of her Colonies.... The external field of congenial adventure for the young noble, as well as of cheerful and profitable employment for the peasant youth, which the shipping and foreign possessions of the nation furnished, prevented the internal commotions which must inevitably exist in Continental Countries that have no such outlet for their surplus population, nor legitimate safety-valve, so to speak, for the escape of the exuberant and discontented spirits that cannot be restrained at home, but are

always busy in creating revolution or other civil mischief. British Statesmen are not only thus interested in the welfare of the Colonies, but their opportunities and facilities for possessing the most extensive and accurate information bearing on the subject, preclude the moral possibility of their judging without being duly informed, while their moderate but not too remote distance from us enables them to take a more broad, general view of our affairs, unbiased by local prejudice or predilections, and unaffected by the petty personal or sectional interests or jealousies which enter so largely into our Provincial Politics.

When, therefore, a great measure calculated to develope [*sic*] and consolidate our Colonial prosperity as well as promote Imperial interests is proposed and earnestly recommended by the Parent State for our adoption, it is, in my opinion, one of the greatest arguments in its favor. Nay, I go further and say, that, considering the past and present relationship between us and the Mother Country, *it is our duty* to acquiesce. Do we owe nothing to the Mother that bore us? that gave us territorial and political existence — whose sons fought and bled, whose statesmen labored, and whose people taxed themselves to pay for the wars by which these Colonies were acquired and opened up for our forefathers and ourselves, whereby we came into the free and easy possession of the property, prosperity and liberty we enjoy in them? At the very moment when we have but just been delivered from Fenian invasion by the prompt action of the British forces protecting us, are we, in return, to thwart and oppose British policy, to stickle for our opinions, to prefer, not the wish of our protector, parent, and friend, but rather that of her and our enemies? While Great Britain wishes us to unite, the Fenians have avowed it to be their policy to prevent such union. Which of these two should we try to please?[1]

Anglin's commentary in the Freeman on Rogers' letter was brief but hardly congenial.

The Bishop's reasons are not the most cogent or convincing in the world, and we doubt much that they will influence many of those who wish to take them for what they are worth. He and the Orange Grand Master Jacques argue precisely — so completely indeed, that one could almost suppose that the two circulars were written by the same person. We don't know whether the Bishop or the Grand Master will feel most complimented, or most disgusted by this statement; but it is true, and we are bound to speak the truth, let what will come of it.[2]

Rogers was incensed by the comparison and wrote a personal letter of admonition to Anglin.

Referring to what you intend as a sarcastic comment on my letter to Mr. Williston, I take the liberty to inform you that you do yourself no honor as a Catholic journalist, when, not attempting to confute its arguments, you descend

1 Rogers to Williston, undated [mid-May], in *Freeman*, 22 May 1866.

2 *Freeman*, 22 May 1866.

to the subterfuge of destroying its effect among Catholics, by saying that one would suppose it to have been written by the same person who wrote the Circular of the Orange Grand Master; while the influence of the latter document you wish to destroy among the Orangemen, who have been your political associates, and whose support you wish still to retain, by the innocent inuendo [*sic*] that it would appear to have been written by the same person who wrote the letter of the Catholic Bishop.

This ingenius [*sic*] little piece of diplomatic equivocation, this dialectical two-edged sword which cuts on all sides, might do honor to the acumen of a crafty politician, who, Janus-like, looks both ways, having no respect for persons or principles, or truth, when seeking to defeat his opponent, or gain his object; but for the chivalrous, honest journalist of the FREEMAN, who feels "bound to speak the truth come what will of it", it is rather a glaring little bit of sophistry which does *him* no honor. It is not honestly meeting the argument, not truthfully letting it go "for what it is worth".

But my object at present is to repel the implied insult which you offer to a Catholic Bishop, in associating him with an Orange Grand Master. You had been guilty of this gross impropriety before, in reference to Archbishop Connolly and the Bishop of Arichat, when you so "freely" and "unreservedly" criticised their letters. Were you, in your criticisms, to associate the pastors of your church with clergymen of other churches or religious bodies, or as professional men with doctors, lawyers, &c., or as citizens with other citizens, whether lay or professional, there would have been nothing in it improper. But there is such an incongruity — so repugnant to all sense of reverential feeling in an Irish Catholic especially — between the office of Catholic Bishop, a prince of peace, the religious pastor of the people of his diocese, and that of the head of any secret, oath-bound, political, discord-producing Society, whether it be one of Orangemen, Ribbonmen, Know-nothings, Carbonari, or Fenians, that it would be difficult to imagine a greater indignity which you could offer to a Prelate of your Church, however humble he may be personally, than such association.

Trusting that your future course may not force me to a continuance of this unpleasant duty.[3]

But prior to reading the Freeman's comments of 22 May, Rogers had written two other letters. The first, dated 17 May 1866, to L.P.W. DesBrisay, Confederate candidate in Kent County, maintained that "in holding my opinion in favor of Confederation, I but coincide with the highest and most enlightened ecclesiastics of the Catholic Church in these North American Colonies".[4] *The second letter, to J.M. Johnson, another Confederate candidate in Northumberland, was lengthier and more interesting, not least because it was written while Anglin was*

3 Rogers to Anglin, 26 May, in *Freeman*, 31 May 1866.

4 In *Freeman*, 26 May 1866.

on a speaking tour in the Miramichi. In the first half of the letter Rogers discussed his view of the nature of the constitution and exonerated Lieutenant Governor Arthur Gordon from the charge of having violated the principles of responsible government.

But it may be asked, why do I thus interest myself in a mere secular or political matter? I reply, because independently of my interest in common with others in the integrity of our Government, the honour of its officers, and the general welfare of the Country to be promoted by its measures, the honor and interests of the Catholic body have become so affected by side issues and circumstances connected with the discussion of this question as well as the other one of Confederation, during the last year or two, that I feel it due to my people and to myself to give public expression to my opinions on the present occasion.

One of the leading newspapers of this Province, which has commented with grave injustice on the conduct of the governor in the issue between him and his late Advisers, is published and edited by a Catholic. Although this gentleman is a layman and his paper a secular newspaper, nevertheless it has come to be very generally regarded as the exponent of the feeling of the Catholic body, both lay and clerical, of this Province. The personal virtues and accomplishments of Mr. Anglin — his love of his Religion and of his Native Land, the integrity of his private life, his genial amiability in social intercourse, his acknowledged ability as a writer and editor, combine to give a strength and effect to the influence of his newspaper through-out the extensive circle of his readers of all classes — but especially among Catholics and Irishmen. Everything said and written by such a man, or published with his approbation in his newspaper, bears a special importance and influence derived from the fame of its author. Should such a one err in the views he advocates, or the course he adopts — as sometime [*sic*] happens to the best men — the injury he does is extensive, and can only be counteracted by extraordinary means. Now it is because I believe such extraordinary means to be necessary on the present occasion, that I feel it a sacred duty for the honor of the Catholic Body, to disclaim all approbation of or sympathy with, the unjust and unbecoming censure of the Governor which for some time back appeared in the St. John FREEMAN. Apart from the general respect which the Representative of our Most Gracious Queen claims from all classes in the Province, our present Governor, the Hon. A.H. Gordon, deserves, not only common justice, but the undying gratitude of the Catholics of this Province for his prompt, effective, manly and honorable defence of them in his speeches at St. Andrews and Woodstock when their loyalty was impugned. On this occasion, when the terror of Fenian invasion and Fenian sympathy spread over the Province, when so many of our Protestant neighbours, in the panic of the moment, yielded credence to the absurd reports in circulation that all Catholics were Fenians, ready to rise suddenly on their Protestant neighbours, His Excellency Governor Gordon, with a promptitude and energy characteristic of him, sprang to the scene of trouble, and by his personal influence and official

authority calmed the storm. It was owing to this well-timed act of Gubernatorial justice, together with the happy influence exercised by the published letters of His Grace the Archbishop of Halifax, that this unfortunate bitter social persecution — mutual mistrust and mutual hatred — did not culminate to a melancholy point. If Mr. Anglin, by the general course he followed both in politics and in his newspaper, did not contribute somewhat (though certainly unintentionally, I admit,) to excite this mutual bad feeling, he was in no small degree the occasion of it.

I thank you for the clear correct exposition of the true state of the constitutional question, by which you show His Excellency far from meriting the odium which Mr. Anglin would impose upon him. I regret exceedingly the public course this gentleman is pursuing in opposing so strenuously the policy of the British Government respecting these Colonies. His course is calculated to create and foster a spirit of discontent and disunion amongst our people and their neighbours; and retard the accomplishment of the measure, already regarded as inevitable, and, certainly in my opinion, essential to our future political and commercial prosperity. Were it not that, for the reasons mentioned above, this gentleman's influence amongst our people is so great to lead them into a wrong course where he errs himself, I would not think it necessary to make these allusions to him. But when, in addition to the influence he exerts in his paper, he now makes his first visit to Miramichi to interfere with our elections, and by his personal presence and agitation divert our Catholic people from the course advised them by their local friends and guides, I lose all patience with him.[5]

The following day Rogers took a few more pot-shots at Anglin in a letter addressed to Richard Sutton, yet another of the Confederate candidates in the four-member constituency of Northumberland. After first implying that those who opposed Confederation must either be protecting selfish interests or be desirous of seeing the ruination of the colony, Rogers noted the different, nay conflicting, economic interests of Saint John and Chatham-Newcastle before turning his attention to Anglin.

I can understand how Mr. Anglin would feel at home in addressing a St. John audience, for whose exclusive interest, to the injury even of the North, he had so devotedly labored; but how he could so far stulify [*sic*] himself by coming, in the present circumstances, to address — I will not say insult — the people of Miramichi, by trying to make it appear that he was for their interest, is to me inexplicable. As mentioned in a former letter, I have ever entertained the highest personal regard for Mr. Anglin on account of the undoubted abilities and virtues for which I gave him credit, though I never admired nor approved of the sharp, bitter, cynical, often unjust and uncharitable style in which he writes of persons to whom he is opposed. Certainly his first visit to Miramichi, considering the

5 Rogers to J.M. Johnson, 22 May, in *Freeman*, 26 May 1866.

object of it, and the effect it produced — as well as others which it might have, nay, almost did produce — does not increase my admiration of his judgment. He was brought on because he was a Catholic, to excite the Catholic and Irish sympathy against the Governor and present Government, and against Confederation. It is now admitted by all that his visit and his speeches here defeated their object. He has shown that the tendency both of the matter and manner of his addresses, as well as of much of his writings, is — without any adequate reason, and where no religious principle is at stake — to create the Frankinstein [*sic*] monster of Religious Discord which he could never allay....

Let me advise Mr. Anglin to let Archbishops and Bishops, and their writings alone, except to respect them, and obey them where they bind him. They will have professed opponents enough to turn them into contempt, without his self-constitutional official co-operation. He errs when, in order to please the Orange party in St. John, with whom he is politically associated, he brags in his paper of the 19th inst., about how "freely" and "unreservedly" he criticised the letters of Archbishop Connolly and the Bishop of Arichat, as well as the circular of the Orange Grand Master. He mistakes the nature of his self-imposed office and authority, and labors under a false conscience, if he thinks that, because he has undertaken for a living to edit a penny paper, he is bound to publish in it lucubrations calculated to bring the persons and office of those in authority — whether in Church or State — into contempt. What would be a violation of the law of God to speak, is by a stronger reason, a sin to print and circulate extensively. If in conversation, and social and civil intercourse, justice and charity oblige us to guard our words, lest they detract from the reputation or wound the feelings of our neighbor unnecessarily, the same obligations bind us to guard our writings. We are bound as Christians to promote peace — not discord. Now I regret to say that in all these points, the paper of Mr. Anglin has been at fault — at least I thought so in reading it for some couple years back, and I fear that many others thought so too. If other papers have been equally culpable, that is no justification for him.

I regret that a sense of duty —certainly not a pleasant one — forces me to deliver this homily to Mr. Anglin. As he is the subject of the venerated Bishop of Saint John, a feeling of delicacy prevented me from doing what for some months back I certainly felt inclined to do, viz., disavow in some public manner those parts of Mr. Anglin's course to which I take exception, in order to separate the responsibility of his individual sayings or writings from the Catholic Body. Nor would I have broken through that delicacy now were it not for his discord-producing incursion into my humble domain at the present critical juncture, to oppose my views and influence with my people. I trust I shall never again have occasion to criticise so "freely" and "unreservedly" any of his public writings or public acts — except to approve of and praise them.[6]

6 Rogers to Sutton, 23 May, in *Freeman*, 29 May 1866.

That the Bishop was thoroughly annoyed at Anglin was further evidenced by a note sent to the editor of the Freeman on 24 May.

Your complimentary comment on my letter to Mr. Williston, published in your paper of the 22nd inst., for the sake of "truth" which you are "bound to speak", precludes the necessity of my offering any apology for the few words of the same community in reference to yourself, contained in my letter addressed to Mr. Sutton, a copy of which I beg herein to enclose.[7]

To this point the 'debate' had been rather one-sided. The delay in Anglin's response to the Bishop may be attributed to a time-lag caused by the printing of Rogers' letters, the receipt of same by Anglin and publication dates of the Freeman. On 26 May, Anglin's comments on Rogers' letters to DesBrisay and Johnson were printed. Anglin charged the Bishop with making "a most unjust and unwarrantable attack" and claimed that Rogers "seems determined to stop at nothing in order [to] help those who would force our country into Confederation".

The Governor's conduct...and the conduct of the late Government, the Bishop misrepresents as grossly as his friend Mr. Mitchell — from whom he appears to have taken his views — could misrepresent it.

The Bishop must know little of the history of the Province prior to his advent amongst us if he imagines that Mr. Anglin has ever done or said anything to cause strife or sectarian animosity; if he does not know that Mr. Anglin has done as much as any one could do to allay all such angry feelings, and to restore and maintain harmony and good will between Catholics and Protestants of all denominations — not by slavish, servile sycophancy indeed, but by showing a determination always to do justice to all.

The idea that the Catholics ought not to condemn the unconstitutional conduct of the Governor now because some time ago he chose to speak the truth and denounce the accusation that they were all Fenians, as the base calumny it was, is indeed the most startling proposition we have seen for a long time. Yet this or even more is what this part of the Bishop's letter means if it means anything. Were this political doctrine to be accepted Catholics should be ready to sacrifice all political rights for some denominational advantage, real or imaginary, and should be ready to support and defend, in any act of tyranny or wrong, the Governor who threw them a few kind words. We do not believe that such is the character of the Catholic body. They are grateful for kindness — even for kind words — but they love liberty too much, they prize the independance [*sic*] of the country and the rights of its people too dearly to be allured into a conspiracy against them by any selfish motives. We are sorry that the Bishop has put his case in such a way. If the differences with the Governor were merely personal, then indeed such a line of argument could be understood. But when the Constitutional rights of the people are threatened, what matters it what the

7 Rogers to Anglin, 24 May, in *Freeman*, 31 May 1866.

Governor said some months ago of Catholics or Fenians or of any other persons whatever. It is too absurd to expect that Catholics will say wrong is right because the Governor said they are not all Fenians.[8]

In the following issue of the Freeman, Anglin expanded his critique of the Rogers to Johnson communication.

We could not desire that one holding his [Rogers'] position should deliberately lie, as others who previously made similar assertions [that Anglin excited mutual bad feeling] did lie, knowingly and wilfully, and we could only be astonished that even after what he has seen of the country and learned of its history, he could have believed a falsehood so utterly, so notoriously groundless. Before he repeated this calumny, for the obvious purpose of exciting ill feeling towards Mr. Anglin, and destroying the influence of his arguments, he [complimented Anglin]....

But this was but a cunning device to give more force to the calumny that followed, and make it appear as the reluctant admission of a friend, and not as the malignant invention of an avowed enemy. It is strange, however, that the Bishop did not perceive that his two statements contradict one another. Surely not even Dr. Rogers can believe that Mr. Anglin can be a man of integrity and amiability and love his religion, and at the same time endeavour to excite mutual bad feeling.

But the open attack on Mr. Anglin did not grieve us half as much as the fact that in this letter the Bishop of Chatham accepts for Irish Catholics, as far as he can speak for them, a position the most degrading men not slaves could possibly hold, and that he "endorses", as far as he can, the worst calumnies ever uttered against them by their worst enemies. Take his letter as conclusive evidence and you must, indeed, believe that Catholics, as their enemies say, care nothing about constitutional rights or liberties, nothing about the independence of the country; that they are not fit to be entrusted with the franchise because, instead of looking to the welfare of the country, they but seek to gain some denominational advantage, and for some such advantages they are willing to sacrifice all the rights of the people. Take the word of the Bishop of Chatham for it and the Catholics of the Province were bound to sustain and support the Governor in his most flagitious violation of the principles of Responsible Government, because some months ago he said that all the Catholics were not Fenians.

Another calumny which causes much injury not only to the Catholics as a body, but to the whole people, because so many believing it are led to take one side for no better reason than that the majority of Catholics are on the other, is that Catholics have no opinion or will of their own; that they dare not think or reason for themselves on political subjects, but that they must obey the will of their spiritual guides in all things. This absurd calumny against the whole Catholic body, the Bishop also deliberately confirms. No one ever thought of

8 *Freeman*, 26 May 1866.

objecting to Mr. Mitchell's coming to St. John to state his case, or to Mr. Tilley's going through the country to address all who chose to hear him. But because Mr. Anglin is a Catholic the Bishop of Chatham seems to imagine that he committed some grave offence, if not a crime, by going to Northumberland to oppose a political project of which the Bishop approved....

Mr. Anglin never knew that in politics a rational, intelligent people would submit to have any guides. He never knew that it was an offence to appear before any people to state the case on any political question, to give his views, and calmly and dispassionately to explain the reasons on which those views are founded. He does not know that in this respect Catholics differ in any degree from Protestants. They have the right to think and judge for themselves, even though the Bishop seems to assert that they have not. Mr. Anglin had just as much right to speak in Northumberland on any political subject, if the people chose to hear him, as Mr. Mitchell or Mr. Johnson, or as the Bishop of Chatham himself, and the people, if he could have convinced them, had just as much right to agree with Mr. Anglin and vote against the Confederation Scheme, as to agree with the Bishop and vote for Confederation. Mr. Anglin, as all who heard him know, did not address himself to the Catholics alone, or as a separate body. He addressed the people without distinction. This he had a right to do, and he and the Catholics of New Brunswick will never consent to accept such a humiliating, degrading position as the Bishop of Chatham, in his great zeal for Confederation, would now assign them — a position which their worst enemies have long striven to prove that they do occupy; a position with which even the freedmen of the Southern States would be ashamed to be content. Better a thousand times we were all disfranchised.

The calumny that Mr. Anglin has done anything to stir up bad feeling, would be almost too ridiculous for serious notice, were it not repeated by a Bishop. When Mr. Anglin commenced the publication of the FREEMAN the whole Province was in a lamentable condition. Then indeed mutual bad feeling prevailed in many quarters. From the first he laboured earnestly and successfully to allay those feelings, not indeed by asking that Catholics should cower and tremble before every squall evil-minded men may raise; not by abandoning one jot or tittle of their right to perfect and complete equality with their fellow-subjects; not by assuming that they must not think and reason for themselves, and act on their own convictions of what is right; not by declaring that they must follow any guides who claim the right to lead them; not by setting himself up as a guide or leader or prophet, but by defending them when they were right and censuring any individual amongst them who did wrong; by explaining their real position, their true motives and principles; by acting always impartially, and by showing that they were not so indifferent to the public welfare, but that amongst them were as many pure, earnest, intelligent and incorruptible men as could be found in any other body. These labours, we are happy to say, won the approval of honest men of all parties. Of what the

Catholics have done to manifest their opinion on this point it is not necessary to speak; but Mr. Anglin has been twice elected a representative of the County of St. John, and on both occasions received a large number of votes from the most respectable Protestants of the community....[9]

Anglin claimed that he had refrained from making these comments in the Freeman of 26 May because he recognized that Rogers' "sacred office should shield and protect him against the reply which the manifesto so richly deserved". The factor that had changed Anglin's mind was Rogers' letter to Sutton.

We did not wish to write what may possibly be regarded by any one as disrespectful when written of a Bishop, although mild, and forbearing, and respectful when compared to the ordinary language of political controversies. To a Bishop every Catholic owes obedience in things spiritual, and respect in all things, and it was hard to tell the truth of that letter and yet avoid all grounds for the charge of want of respect. But the Bishop was not satisfied with this. After Mr. Anglin had left the County altogether the Bishop chose to issue another manifesto absolutely atrocious in its spirit and temper, in manner and matter. We can not imagine what it was that hurried him into such an excess. The *Religious Intelligencer*, the *Journal*, the *Telegraph* and the *News*, all combined, never exceeded this letter in violence, in bitterness, in scurrility, in mean insinuations, and we would almost add in gross falsehoods, were it not that we believe Dr. Rogers incapable of that, no matter how angry he might be. It is bad enough to find him repeating and endorsing the most gross and villainous falsehoods ever uttered against a man whom he pretends to praise for his integrity and his love of religion. It must be that the party whose prime canvasser and electioneering agent he has become, felt that Mr. Anglin's speeches had done some good, had opened the eyes of the people to the truth, and they [*sic*] induced him, we hope by false representations, to issue a document which is an insult to every Irishman in the Province.

It must be in very desperation that he, a Catholic bishop, descended to employ the language of which the *Telegraph*, and *Intelligencer*, and *Reporter* and the other papers whose part of the business it is to abuse Irish Catholics and Catholicity, so long enjoyed a monopoly; plunged so deeply into this contest, and we had almost said prostituted his high and holy office to the service of a party the most selfish and unprincipled that ever sought the confidence of the people; that he, in the hands and under the management of Hon. Peter Mitchell, not only put himself on a level with the Orange Grand Master Jacques, manipulated by other members of the same party, but outraged all propriety in a manner Mr. Jacques did not attempt.[10]

As for the contents of Rogers' missive to Sutton, Anglin hotly defended himself.

9 *Freeman*, 29 May 1866.

10 *Freeman*, 29 May 1866.

The Bishop accuses Mr. Anglin of the worst and most selfish motives. This charge Mr. Anglin does not retort...those who know him will not believe the charge well founded. We [*sic*] may say that Mr. Anglin's visit and his speeches defeated their object. "If so", every sensible man will ask "what the necessity for this violent manifesto issued after the speeches were spoken?" It may be very well to sneer at a penny paper, but a Bishop does not do well when he descends to such a mode of dealing with an adversary. The charge that Mr. Anglin is associated with the "Orange party" in St. John might have been a very good appeal in Northumberland, but the Bishop must have known as well as we do that, although Mr. Anglin got the votes of many Orangemen, and hopes to get the votes of many at the coming election, he never purchased such support by the slightest sacrifice of principle, and never applied to the Orange Society as a body for their support as Orangemen, as their friends — Mitchell & Co. — have now done. He must have known that Mr. Anglin never appeals to Catholics as Catholics, or Orangemen as Orangemen, to vote in any way, but that he appeals to all the people, without distinction of class, or creed, or race; that he appeals to the reason and not to the prejudices of men, and that if he makes any allusion at any time to the differences which prevail, it is as at Chatham — to urge his audience to forget all such differences and distinctions, and to think for themselves and judge for themselves what the welfare of the country demands at their hands. The Bishop says, that as Christians we are bound to promote peace — not discord. This [Rogers'] mode of promoting peace is, to say the least of it, most extraordinary. While Mr. Anglin can defy all his opponents to point out a single word or deed of his calculated to create ill-will, we trust and hope most fervently that this [Rogers'] manifesto will not disturb the peace of the Irish Catholics, with feelings of manhood it outrages so grossly.

The Bishop advised Mr. Anglin to let Archbishop and Bishops and their writings alone. That was not always the wish of Archbishops and Bishops, who sometimes found Mr. Anglin a very useful auxiliary when they were on the right side and had hard work to maintain the right. Mr. Anglin has always treated Bishops and clergymen of all degrees with the utmost respect, and he shall continue to do so however he may differ from them on political questions. He will always strive to obey their writings when they bind him, and to respect their writings even when they deal with political questions. But we claim without any "bragging" about it, the full right to criticize their essays, even when written by Bishops or Archbishops, and to say what we think of them in the mildest and most temperate language circumstances will permit us to use. The Bishop of Chatham thinks that the last letter of Archbishop Connolly contained arguments that are unanswerable, and complains that we called them fallacious, as we showed them to be: and he complains very bitterly of our comments on the letter of the Bishop of Arichat which proved him to be, though a zealous, and learned, and most estimable Bishop, a very simple minded politician. Now twaddle is twaddle, even if written by a Bishop...the circular which the Bishop of

Chatham gave to Mr. Williston to ensure his election, although a smoothly written piece of composition was decidedly the silliest twaddle we ever saw in print. Yet we did not say so because that may fairly be deemed an offensive and improper way of dealing with the letter of a Bishop, even if he were not so zealous and pious an ecclesiastic as Dr. Rogers is well known to be. The letter we...subjoin [Rogers to Sutton] can hardly be described as twaddle, however. It is too fierce, too bitter, too reckless for that.[11]

Even this lengthy commentary did not conclude Anglin's activities vis-a-vis Rogers on the 29th for on the same day Anglin wrote a sharply worded personal letter to the Bishop.

In courtesy I have to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 24th inst. No apology is ever needed in my opinion for telling the truth of me, but I am sorry to find — for your own sake, My Lord — that you have believed of me the worst and most vile calumnies and falsehoods that my worst enemies have been able to correct [*sic*]; and that you have chosen to repeat them with your own episcopal imprimatur. You cannot be surprised that I answer somewhat plainly and frankly as I have done in this day's FREEMAN: that I pronounce these statements false which are false, that I repel and repudiate your monstrous assumption of the power to decide for Catholics in your diocese how they shall vote on political subjects, and that I assert the rights of myself and my fellow-countrymen to perfect equality with their Protestant fellow-subjects on the political platform; their absolute right to think and judge for themselves on all political matters.

I am sorry to find in your short note to me the bitter, cynical spirit of which you so unjustly accuse me in your letter to Mr. Sutton. While I was in Miramichi, I did not, either in public or private, say a disrespectful word of you, or use any expression that ought to have so deeply moved you. Do not misunderstand me, however, I do not complain of the course you have chosen to take. It is not I, my Lord, who have anything to fear from a prolongation of the controversy you have forced upon me, or from any truths you or any one else may choose to state, or even from the wretched calumnies which your Lordship is so willing to borrow from the armory of the most unprincipled enemies of Catholics and Catholicity.[12]

Anglin claimed that he would not have published in the Freeman of 31 May the private correspondence from and to Rogers had he not received on the 30th Rogers' letter of 26 May. The latter communication, which rebuked Anglin for suggesting the 'association' between the Bishop and the Orange Grand Master, was, the Freeman claimed, "evidently intended for publication". The Bishop, Anglin self-righteously asserted, "seems to revel in the excitement he himself

11 *Freeman*, 29 May 1866.

12 Anglin to Rogers, 29 May, in *Freeman*, 31 May 1866.

does so much to produce, and will not let us be silent even when we would". As for the Bishop's arguments, the Freeman stated, "it would be disrespectful to say that he seems...to mistake the crozier for a shillelagh, but certainly...he endeavours to floor his adversaries, not by force of reason, but by a most unfair and extra canonical use of his Episcopal authority".

The Bishop sees inuendo [*sic*] and craft where there is none. We never insinuated or meant to insinuate that the writer of the letter to Mr. Williston and of the circular to the Orangemen were the same. Such an idea never entered into our imagination and except the Bishop himself no one we believe so interpreted the few lines in which we drew attention to the remarkable coincidence of thought and expression in some passages of the two documents....

The Bishop may now feel that his fierce attack on Mr. Anglin requires to be justified if possible. He probably feels that the Irish Catholics of the Province, and the people of the Province of all classes and creeds, must condemn the means he has chosen to adopt in order to serve the political party whose most faithful ally he now is, and therefore it is that he tries to show that Mr. Anglin threw the first stone. But this will not avail him.....

The Bishop complains that we associated him not with clergymen of other churches, &c., or as a citizen with citizens, and that we committed a grave irreverence when we associated him in the same brief article with the Grand Master of the Orangemen. The Bishop forgets that this association was not of our making, but of his own; that he and the Grand Master were the only two in this Province who issued official circulars calling on any portion of the people to abdicate the right to think and judge for themselves and to obey the voice of authority....

The Bishop complains too that we do not meet his arguments. Well, to tell the truth, we could find no argument in his letter to Mr. Williston, and his letter to Mr. Sutton was more like the raving of a fish-wife in a high state of excitement than the "solemn reasoning" of a Bishop. We are always ready to meet argument with argument, but we have no taste for mere abuse, and when a Bishop chooses to employ that mode of dealing with us, we are content to stand on the defensive, and we would be ashamed to meet abuse with abuse or calumny with calumny, Of that course of argument Dr. Rogers is welcome, as far as we are concerned, to an entire monopoly.

We beg of the Bishop that he will not, out of any regard or consideration for Mr. Anglin, omit to discharge any duty which in his opinion circumstances may impose upon him.[13]

The Freeman's effusions provoked Rogers to send to Anglin a final explanatory and admonitory statement on 31 May. The main letter itself had been written on 28 May, by which time the Freeman had not gone beyond giving a rather restricted commentary on Rogers' views and activities. The Bishop had held

13 *Freeman*, 31 May 1866.

back this letter "in the hopes that the Editor of the Freeman would apologize for the grossness of the insult which, unprovoked by any word or act or writing on the part of the Bishop, he had given him in his paper". But after reading the Freeman of the 29th the Bishop concluded "that all hope of honorable peace is vain", and sent the letter. As it was Rogers' concluding statement in the controversy, it is presented virtually in toto.

The ignominious defeat which your visit to Miramichi brought upon the friends of your party here, at whose bidding you came to create strife, has not been sufficient to teach you discretion. In your paper of the 26th inst. you persist in your undignified, insulting style, in reference to a Bishop of your Church. "The Bishop misrepresents us grossly". "He seems determined to stop at nothing", his letters you derisively style "Remarkable and Extraordinary Manifestos", &c., &c.

"The most remarkable and extraordinary manifesto of all" which your mischief-making visit elicited — which would never have been written but for that visit — and which finally was written in the interests of peace, to save yourself and others who might have become involved in your misfortune, from the sad effects of the riots which I am morally certain would have happened at Newcastle and Chatham had it not been for the strong influence exercised by the leading men of the party whom you came to oppose — this "manifesto", I say, addressed to Mr. Johnson, in which you were treated with a courtesy of which the above ungentlemanly expressions show you to have been unworthy was not enough for you. By those expressions you "manifest" a wish to elicit more such "manifestos". Well, you shall have your wish gratified.

The people of Miramichi sometimes speak of what they call the "big election" which took place here some years ago. The late Hon. Joseph Cunard did a large business at that time in Chatham. The other great business Firm of Gilmour, Rankine & Co., had their Establishments then, as now, on the Newcastle side of the River. Each of these Rival Firms had its own favorite candidate in the field. The employees — clerks, workmen, lumbermen, &c., of both Firms, as is usual, took an active part and felt warmly for the success of their own respective sides. The feeling ran high. Large parties of both sides met at the Courthouse in Newcastle. It did not require much provocation from impulsive and indiscreet persons of either side to precipitate the general fight which soon ensued. Many persons were badly wounded by opposing combatants who had previously been their intimate personal friends. One worthy peaceable man, who had no share in the fight was killed at his own door, to which a fugitive, (for whom the deadly blow was intended,) followed by his pursuers, had come.

For years afterwards the bitter recollection of that quarrel excited the worst feelings and passions. It was necessary to have a body of soldiers brought from Fredericton and stationed in Chatham to preserve peace. Many, if not the greater part of those on both sides engaged in that fight, were Catholics.

When on last Pentecost Sunday after Mass you did me the honor to call upon

me in the vestry, I was moved by mingled feelings. On the one hand I would like to receive and treat with becoming kindness and attention a distinguished Catholic gentleman who in former times had rendered most valuable service to Religion, and was still so generally respected by the great body of his co-religionists. But, on the other hand, the reflection that your presence here at this critical moment as the great political gladiator of your party might occasion such another election fight as that mentioned above, in which our poor people would be excited perhaps to kill each other, made my heart sicken at the thought. On my way up to Newcastle that afternoon to attend to the meeting on Church business which had been announced, I thought of you, your visit and its probable consequences. In revolving the matter in my mind, I begged of the Holy Ghost on that His own day to guide me.

I saw that on the morrow there would be gathered together all the elements of the danger which I apprehended. The contest was likely to be severe. The men on both sides commanded great influence. Mr. Huchison represented all the business intercourse (or, as you would call it, Ledger influence) of the great and respectable House of Gillmor, Rankin & Co., while there were few men, if any, in this part of the Province, more generally respected personally by all — and by none more than myself than he. On the other side were Mr. Williston, than whom no Representative could be more attentive to the people's wants and wishes; Mr. Kerr, the mention of whose name is enough to elicit universal respect; Messrs. Mitchell and Johnston, whose respectability and talents are indicated by the exalted positions they did, and do at present respectively hold. Now of all the men in New Brunswick there is not one whose presence on that occasion would be likely to irritate the two last-mentioned gentlemen so much as yourself. They had formerly been severely stung by the venom of your pen. Even if they would be able to command their temper when provoked by you on the morrow, their friends could probably not command theirs. Any disrespectul manifestation of feelings towards you would be instantly resented by the Irish and Catholic clement in the crowd. A general fight would ensue, and God alone knows who, how, or where it would end. Arriving at Newcastle I sought an interview with Messrs. Williston and Mitchell. We paced the road and consulted for some half an hour. I resolved then to remain in Newcastle until after the excitement of the Nomination day would have passed, in order to be at hand to do my best by my personal influence, should it be necessary to prevent a quarrel. They promised me to use every exertion to preserve order on the morrow, which they faithfully fulfilled. As you had been brought on as to the great Catholic Golian [*sic*] to destroy any influence which my printed letter to Mr. Williston might have, I undertook to take charge of you. My letter to Mr. Johnson, which possibly helped to put him at the head of the poll and your friend so below, as well as to preserve peace during your stay in Miramichi, was the result effected by your proceedings at Newcastle.

You say this letter contained "an unjust and unwarrantable attack" on you. I

deny the charge! My letter was written in self-defence, and states the truth, and that in the mildest terms the nature of the subject would permit; and if ever the letter of a clerical Pastor was not only "warrantable" but absolutely necessary to preserve the peace and interests of his flock, and to exonerate himself and them from the odious conduct of a supposed exponent of their feelings, it was on that occasion. You came to "attack", the Governor and all here opposed to you. Your very visit to oppose my influence was, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, if not an "attack", at least indelicate, and gave me much anxiety for your own immunity from outrage and for the peace of my people. As the Representative of the large and influential Catholic Community of St. John, as Editor of the paper which has been looked upon as the mouth-piece of the Catholic Body of the province, you had already involved all of us in your insane course. When, moreover, you came to the town of my residence to repeat your "attacks" *ad nauseam*, my further silence would have stamped with the seal of my approbation what I regarded as your shameful course towards the Governor — a Gentleman who had so signally merited our gratitude. Every feeling of decency and self-respect commanded me to speak, to exonerate myself from the responsibility of your acts. In doing so I could not treat you with more delicacy and courtesy compatible with justice.

But I hurl back upon yourself the foul accusation of "unjust and unwarrantable attack" — which without any provocation, you had made upon me. Like the fugitive culprit who cries "stop thief!" in order to divert attention from himself, you charge upon others that of which you have been so notoriously guilty. Before you left home for Miramichi, before you knew what kind of reception you would receive here, before I had ever written a line about you, you perpetrated "an unjust and unwarrantable attack" on me in your sneering, double-dealing insulting little critique on my letter to Mr. Williston, classifying me with Orange Grand Master for the therein maliciously expressed purpose of creating in me "disgust" and that, too — deceitful and untruthful as was your statement — under the hypocritical guise of feeling obliged to "speak the truth come what will of it".

This "attack" of yours did not appear in Miramichi until after your departure; but it came fortunately before the election and brought forth another letter from me containing a few items of real "truth", that ensured Mr. Sutton's return, and that must have ere this benefitted you a little — unless indeed you be too far demented to profit of it.

Instead of gaining wisdom from the defeat of your Northern Expedition, on your return home you fill your paper of the 26th inst. with the same dishonest, scurrilous, ungentlemanly style of attack on me as that in which you assailed the Governor. You may yet have reason to regret that ever you had the temerity to provoke such a quarrel with an humble, unoffending, unobtrusive Bishop, who had ever entertained for you the kindest feeling, although he did not approve of all you wrote, and who even now would not speak severely of you did he not feel

it a duty to defend his own honor and to preserve the Catholic people of his diocese from the trouble and discomfiture which their adhesion to your mistaken political and editorial course would bring upon them....[14]

Anglin delayed his response and final statement until the elections were over. He noted, however, that the Bishop's letter had been circulated both in handbill form and through republication in the Saint John Telegraph. In any case the Freeman also published the final Rogers' letter in its edition of 9 June. In his critique, which brought the Rogers-Anglin Confederation controversy to a close, the editor of the Freeman began by reviewing what his paper had said in its commentary on Rogers' letter to Williston.

Our great offence "hath this extent; no more". But it would be well to remember that the Bishop never saw this little critique until after Mr. Anglin was invited to Miramichi and that he cannot therefore find in this any justification of his conduct up to that time.

The Bishop seems to labour under some misapprehensions which it may be as well to remove. Mr. Anglin was invited to Miramichi before the Bishop's circular to Mr. Williston made its appearance, and was in correspondence with some parties on the subject for days before he knew that such a manifesto was about to appear. Finally he accepted the invitation by telegraph on Friday forenoon, and it was not until the evening of that day that he got a copy of the Circular by mail. Neither was Mr. Anglin alone invited. A similar invitation was given to Mr. Smith, whom Mr. Anglin expected to join him at Shediac; but when he got there Mr. Anglin learned that Mr. Smith had been "down the shore", as the people called it, electioneering for several days, and that the letters and telegrams directed to him had been forwarded only the day before. Mr. Anglin proceeded by the mail stage expecting that Mr. Smith would follow him.

We only make this explanation to remove the false impressions under which the Bishop seems to labour. We do not seek to offer any excuse for Mr. Anglin's going to Miramichi or any other part of the Province, either with or without an invitation to speak to any persons who choose to hear him on any subject he may select. The Bishop seems to have no objection to Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Johnson's going to Gloucester to work in the interests of the Canadian party, or to Mr. Mitchell's going to Kent; but because Mr. Anglin is an Irish Catholic he regards his going to Northumberland as a grave offence, and as in some way an interference with the authority and prerogatives of the Bishop of Chatham. The Bishop's idea seems to be that an Irish Catholic, unless when he chooses to play sycophant and toady, should not presume to speak anywhere save with "bated breath and whispering humbleness". Once for all we tell the Bishop that his letters in this respect insult the intelligence and the manhood of all Irish Catholics; that Mr. Anglin has just as good a right to express his opinions in public and put arguments and facts before the people as any other man has, and that the Bishop of

14 Rogers to Anglin, 28 May, in *Freeman*, 9 June 1866.

Chatham's holding different opinions on any political subject, does not impair that right in the slightest degree, or render Mr. Anglin's exercise of the right in any way indelicate. The opinions of a Bishop ought to have much influence, but they ought not to outweigh reason and common sense. The expression of his opinion orally or by writing should always be received respectfully, but it should not be so couched as to render respect impossible.

The Bishop, if we may judge from his last letter, does not feel quite at ease with himself. He seems to hope that, by declaring he was mainly solicitous for the preservation of the peace, he can calm his own conscience, and satisfy those whom his angry strife-provoking epistles amazed and grieved. But this talk about peace is very absurd. The people of Northumberland are not the brutal semi-civilized savages he would lead us to suppose, and the days are past when the Country was distracted and agitated by the strifes of rival houses. Mr. Anglin found them respectable, intelligent, thinking men. Neither was there so much danger, as the Bishop seems to have apprehended, that the friends of Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Johnson would exhibit themselves as rowdy blackguards, determined to allow no freedom of speech. The Bishop himself admits that if Mr. Anglin had been treated unfairly, the sympathies of the very Irish Catholics, whose votes the Bishop asserts he so controlled, would have been enlisted in Mr. Anglin's favour, and Mr. Mitchell would have lost more, if his friends prevented Mr. Anglin from speaking, than could have been lost in consequence of any Speech he may deliver. Prudence and the desire to carry the election therefore would have induced the friends of Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Johnson to give Mr. Anglin fair play, even if they were actuated by no higher motives.... As far as Mr. Anglin saw there was little disposition on the part of any one to prevent his being heard. Indeed it was only at the urgent demand of the meeting that he consented to speak at Newcastle at all. He had no idea of speaking when he went to the meeting, his object being merely to hear the arguments and statements of the Confederate candidates, in order that he might the better meet and refute or contradict them afterwards. He told Mr. Mitchell in the morning that he would not speak. He said the same to many others, and when, in obedience to the loud call of the crowd, he went to the stand, he told the people that he felt he had no right to interfere with the proceedings on nomination day, and that he would not speak if any one objected. No one did object, and the only man who seemed to take offence at anything in his whole speech was Mr. Sutton. So that there was not the slightest danger of a general fight or of disturbance of any kind. Mr. Anglin dealt only in arguments which might indeed have annoyed some who were afraid of their weight, but at which no man with any pretensions to common sense could take offense. Even in what he said of the Governor he spoke only of the public acts of a public man, using no personal or offensive expressions, and although some of the candidates had repeatedly used the Bishop's name to give weight to their statements, Mr. Anglin made no reference or allusion whatever to that dignitary. Subsequently, at Chatham, he did defend himself against the charge contained in the letter to Mr.

Johnson, viz., that he had gone to Miramichi to make strife, and he appealed not only to the history of his past life but to the honesty and honour of the men who heard him in Newcastle and Chatham, to disprove so groundless a charge. This he did, however, without making direct reference to the circular, and without once using the Bishop's name.

Mr. Anglin did all in his power to show his respect for the Bishop. Hearing the Bishop state at Mass that he was to go to Newcastle that afternoon, he determined to call on him at once. In that interview the Bishop, although he spoke of the differences of their views on Confederation, gave Mr. Anglin no intimation that he entertained such terrible apprehensions of the violence and bloodshed to be caused by his visit. In the aspect and demeanour of his respectable Catholic congregation there was nothing to justify any such apprehensions, nor was there any appearance anywhere else of any disposition to violence and tumult.

What a strange spectacle does the Bishop expose to view when he raises the curtain and lets us see the triumvirate plotting on that Whit Sunday afternoon how they should counteract any efforts Mr. Anglin may make to turn the tide in favour of the Province.

Messrs. Mitchell and Williston, we are told, undertook to preserve the peace, which was not in the slightest danger, and the Bishop "undertook the charge" of Mr. Anglin, whom the Canadian party regarded as very dangerous. And it was for this the Bishop, according to his own statement, invoked the guidance of the Holy Ghost!!!

At one time the Bishop says he dreaded a breach of the peace because the friends of Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Johnson might not be able to behave with propriety; at another he says his apprehensions were excited because Mr. Anglin's visit was made to oppose the Bishop's influence. His fierce and unprovoked and most unjustifiable attack on Mr. Anglin was meant, he now says, to gain for Mr. Anglin "immunity from outrage". It is no wonder after this to find him claim for himself the character of "an humble, unoffending and unobtrusive Bishop" and, as the wolf in the story, accuse Mr. Anglin of being the one to provoke this quarrel....

We will not pursue this painful subject farther. To a Catholic it must ever be most disagreeable to be at issue with Bishops or priests; but although making a livelihood by the publication of a penny paper — at which the Bishop sneers — we too have a duty to perform from which we cannot shrink, however painful and disagreeable it may prove. The FREEMAN has never pretended to speak for the Bishop of Chatham, or for the Catholics as a body...but as one Irish Catholic, the editor of the FREEMAN feels it his duty to protest most solemnly against the monstrous propositions that Irish Catholics hold an inferior position which is properly theirs, that they are not absolutely free to think and judge, and act for themselves in all political questions, and that they ought not to enjoy freedom of speech on the political platform, in as full a degree as any others in New Brunswick.

One deplorable effect the Bishop's manifestoes have had, which we hope he will regret. We are informed, on what we believe reliable authority, that many of the poor wretches who took the Canadian gold on last Wednesday, and afterwards took the bribery oath, tried to find in the Bishop's letter their justification for selling their country and damning their souls. The very idea is almost too horrible to be entertained, and yet the evidence is so reliable and so abundant that we are compelled to believe that some such plea was made by some of those who took bribes to the parties who remonstrated with them.[15]

15 *Freeman*, 9 June 1866.