The Formative Years of the Polish Seminary in the United States, Joseph Swastek, Orchard Lake, MI, 1985, 127 p.

FOREWORD

The Centennial Year of the Orchard Lake Schools will be remembered for the appearance of a few publications which will give readers a sense of the history of those unique institutions that have served the Polonia on American soil since 1885. Conscious of the indefatigable work and zeal of our beloved founder, Father Joseph Dąbrowski, the Orchard Lake Schools are proud to reprint this study of their origins by Father Joseph Swastek. The Formative Years of the Polish Seminary in the United States will be, I believe, well and widely read by the thousands of alumni of the Schools as well as by those who believe that the present is always rooted in some fashion in the past.

When Rev. Joseph Swastek published the history of the early years of the Polish Seminary in 1959, the formal recovery of Polish American history had barely begun. Scholars in other disciplines had taken the lead in the study of Polish immigrants and their children. Sociologists had been using them as models of social change at least since the time of William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki in 1918. Concerned about intercultural misunderstanding and conflict, social workers like Emily Greene Balch began to interpret the great Polish migration for an American audience even earlier in the century.

Professional historians took longer to come to grips with Polish immigration. Aside from the pioneer Mieczysław Haiman, the members of the Polish American Historical Association, and a few others, they ignored the subject until the 1950s. Father Swastek himself was one of the first trained historians of Polish Americans to write in any language. His essay in definition, "What Is a Polish American," in 1944, remains a classic adaptation of the topic to the categories and vocabulary of American historians. As the editor of the journal Polish American Studies from 1946 to 1970, and instructor at the Orchard Lake Schools from 1940 until his death in 1977, he assisted a generation of scholars and students in the exploration of the Polish past in America. Like most historians of Polish America before and since, he was rooted culturally in the events he studied. More than most he profited from the perspective of both his heritage and his discipline. His meticulous scholarship, though it hindered a large production of published works, remains valid today.

Father Swastek's history of the foundation of the Polish Seminary, his major sustained piece of scholarship, has long been difficult to find by virtue of its publication in volume six of Sacrum Poloniae Millennium, now out of print. Its significance is undiminished, however. No new, large body of source material has been added to those which are synthesized in its pages. Further, by demythologizing the founders, Fathers Moczygemba and Dąbrowski, while reaffirming their importance, Father Swastek helped to rescue a major chapter in Polish American history from the spirit of chronicle and self-congratulation. He placed the history of a major immigrant institution squarely in the mainstream of Polish American and American social history. That approach was itself the product of an era in which Polish Americans were preparing to enter the mainstream of American life.

Though he died eight years short of the centennial of the Seminary whose roots he analyzed, Father Swastek witnessed the widespread professionalization and growing popularity of the discipline to which he devoted his academic career. He had made it easier for everyone to
think about Polish Americans and for contemporary Polish Americans to think about themselves. It is fitting that we mark that centennial by reprinting a work which testifies at once to the achievement of the historian and to the history whence he came. Father Swastek made it easier for us to think about our past and consequently to confront our own times.

The sudden death of Father Swastek in September, 1977, deprived us of additional chapters that would have encompassed later eras of the Orchard Lake Schools. We would have been blessed with the historical perspective of a member of the faculty who breathed the history that was being formed about him. We pay tribute to Father Joseph Swastek and to all other writers and historians for whom the history of Orchard Lake is a subject of great personal interest. We thank them for sharing their knowledge with us in the written word.

—Rev. Stanley E. Milewski Chancellor

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PREFACE

This historical study deals with the origins, foundation and early development of the first seminary founded in the United States for the specific purpose of providing Polish-speaking priests for the Polish Catholic immigrants settling in America in ever increasing numbers during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Among the several million European Catholics who came to America up to the first world war, the Irish, German, Italian and Polish immigrants predominated. According to Polish scholars, about 2,000,000 Poles, predominantly Catholic, arrived in the United States and with few exceptions settled there permanently, chiefly in the midwestern and eastern states.

The settlement of the Poles, following and partly accompanying the great influx of Irish and German Catholics, gave added impulse to the growth of national parishes in the United States. In existence since 1789 when the first diocese was created, these parishes served German, French and Spanish-speaking Catholics for over sixty-five years before the establishment of the first Polish parish at Panna Maria, Texas, in 1855.

The mixed national character and vast proportions of the Catholic immigrant wave, coupled with the missionary status of the nascent American church prevailing until 1908, precluded the incorporation of all the newcomers into parishes whose habitual language was English. Instead, the resultant situation indicated the imperative need of new parishes, which would most fruitfully satisfy the specific spiritual wants of the immigrants. In consequence, the necessity as well the utility of national parishes organized on an ever increasing scale as integral parts of American Catholicism began to win growing recognition and support by the time the first Polish parishes started making their appearance.

The founding of Polish parishes, over 800 of which eventually arose in the United States, encountered a serious obstacle in the lack of priests acquainted with the language and customs of the newcomers. At first, religious congregations and immigrant missionaries assisted American bishops in overcoming this difficulty. From the outset, however, their combined efforts failed to keep pace with the steadily growing demand for priests created by the rapid immigrant influx. Local diocesan and religious-order seminaries failed to attract a sufficient number of candidates for priestly work among the immigrants, who were swelling the extant parishes and clamoring for new ones.

Thrown early upon their own resources and ingenuity, the Polish Catholics hit upon the idea of building a seminary which would provide them with priests in any needy diocese in the United States. This concept subsequently resulted in the establishment of the Polish Seminary at Detroit, Michigan, in 1885. After more than two decades of existence, the institution in 1909 moved outside the city to more spacious quarters in Orchard Lake, where it functions to this day.

The phrase "Polish Seminary" is a popular term sanctioned in Polish American circles by over seventy years of usage. For this reason it has been preferred to the formal title of the
institution, which is "Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary". This title appears on official documents and on formal statements. Throughout this study both names will be used interchangeably to designate the same institution which today is referred to collectively as the Orchard Lake Schools or separately, according to its three departments as SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, St. Mary's College, and St. Mary's High School.

How this seminary arose and grew as Polish immigration to the United States assumed mass proportions, how it strove to fulfill its specific purpose during the first seventeen years of its existence (1886-1903), years which constitute not only a crucial but also a complete period of the institution's history comprising the administration of the first Rector — this, in short, forms the topic of the study.

The available literature on the topic is bilingual, Polish and English, varied in content, generally lacking in scholarly character, and presently in need of revision.

Three longer studies of the Polish Seminary have appeared. The earliest are two Polish accounts written by Professor A. Piwowarski: a 64 page brochure published under the pseudonym of Libertus in 1910 to commemorate the silver anniversary and a larger booklet issued anonymously in 1935 to mark the golden jubilee of the institution. Both accounts are commemorative rather than scholarly in nature. While they contain valuable eyewitness descriptions, they deal meagerly with the Detroit phase.

The third study, a manuscript master's thesis of 104 pages written in 1943 at Notre Dame University, is the work of Sister M. Edwin Bozek. Titled Early History of SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, it is the most scholarly of the three accounts. Yet though based partly on primary sources, it also contains considerable lacunae in its review of the Detroit period, carrying the account to 1916.

The seminary has also been the subject of numerous articles, most of them panegyric in tone. Perhaps the most valuable is Father Dąbrowski's own short sketch of the institution's founding; it appeared almost fifty years ago in Rev. W. Kruszka's Historya Polska w Ameryce. Rev. A. Maksimik, professor at the institution, has written informatively about the school in a series of articles which appeared in the seminary monthly, Sodalis.

Considerably more has been written about the first rector, Rev. Joseph Dąbrowski. A semi-scholarly biography, panegyric in tone, written seventeen years ago by Msgr. A. Syski, is still the best. The master's thesis of S. M. Benedicta C. S. S. F., on Father Dąbrowski's contribution to American Catholic education (Wayne University, 1950) is equally notable. The numerous brochures and essays penned by faculty members and sisters, though not without value in certain respects, are largely repetitive, drawing upon each other for information or interpretation. Most need revision in the light of newly found sources relating to Father Dąbrowski.

Besides being incomplete in factual information, all presently available accounts of the Detroit phase of the seminary's past are deficient also in interpretation. Nearly all of them are written in a historical vacuum, with little or no regard for the changing situation in the Polish American scene or for the wider American religious, social, economic and political environment. With few exceptions, they fail to fit the history of the institution into the broader
framework of Polish American, of Catholic and of American events. This perspective as well as new data drawn from recently discovered primary sources this study aims to supply.

The sources used are twofold: primary and secondary. The latter consist of four classes-books, brochures, articles and unpublished studies dealing either directly with the seminary or generally with Polish American development, American Catholicism, and Detroit history. They provide material partly for background study and partly for comparative purposes. Primary sources constitute the backbone of the study. They comprise, first, unpublished materials: original and photostatic copies of correspondence and official papers, records and oral testimony of eyewitnesses. Secondly, they include published sources — contemporary publications of the seminary, extant Polish and English newspapers published in Detroit, and accounts of European visitors at the institution.

The sources come from archival and library collections. The most helpful archives are those in the Polish Seminary. The archives of the Felician Sisters’ Motherhouse in Kraków, Poland, and at Madonna College, Livonia, Michigan, of the Resurrectionist Generalate in Rome, and of the Archdiocesan Chancery in Detroit have supplied valuable photostats. Among libraries, the most useful with its collection of seminary publication and background materials is St. Mary's College Library at Orchard Lake. The Burton Historical Collection in the Detroit Public Library, and the libraries of the Polish National Alliance and of the Polish Roman Catholic Union in Chicago supplied contemporary newspaper files, as did the Jagiellonian University Library in Krakow, Poland.

As an alumnus of and a teacher at the Polish Seminary, the author approaches his topic with keen interest and a special sense of duty. He wishes to emphasize that the study is not intended to be either an apology in defence of or a panegyric in glorification of the institution. His basic aim is to draw up a report of historical research in primary and secondary sources relating to the seminary so that the institution’s past may be brought to light in its proper perspective, without bias, error or guesswork, and with full fidelity to the evidence at hand.

One of the special research problems confronting the writer has been the investigation and evaluation of journalistic materials and oral testimony to supply the lack of documentary evidence for certain phases of the school’s existence. During the removal of the seminary from Detroit to Orchard Lake in 1909, most of the archival scholastic records were lost or destroyed. In the absence of these sources, it became necessary to seek information from surviving newspapers and alumni. This testimony often proved ambiguous and conflicting, both as to fact and as to interpretation. In the absence of positive sources, it has been utilized as tentative supplementary data.

The study has, in the writer's opinion, a threefold significance. First of all, it holds a special interest for the Polish Seminary itself and its several thousand alumni, providing the institution, after seventy-five years of existence, with the first exhaustive account of its origins and early development.

The account may also prove meaningful to students of Polish American history. The seminary is the oldest Polish American institution of higher learning. During its more than seven decades, it has exerted a tangible influence on the religious and cultural life of the Polish American community. The study, it is hoped, contributes toward a better understanding of this influence.
Lastly, the study may not be without interest to historians of American Catholicism and of American social development at large. As the oldest extant seminary founded by immigrants for the training of diocesan priests to minister to non-English speaking Catholics, the institution merits the attention of serious students of American Catholicism looking for causes of the preservation of the immigrants' faith in the United States. American social historians will perhaps find in the seminary's growth meaningful evidence of the Polish Catholic immigrants' response to the social frontier in a predominantly Anglo-Saxon and Protestant-minded environment.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGINS

The Catholic Church in the United States was built up by heterogeneous national groups differing in language and custom yet united in a common faith. To assist in this work of building, the Polish Seminary, or more properly SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, was opened in Detroit, Michigan in December 1886. But before its actual opening, the institution passed through a formative period during which the idea of the seminary took shape until early in 1884 Reverend Joseph Dąbrowski undertook its final realization. These early beginnings, coupled with the ecclesiastical and immigrational background, constitute the subject of this chapter.

The Catholic Church was officially established in the United States on June 9, 1784 with the appointment of Reverend John Carroll as prefect apostolic of the ten-month-old republic.1 For the next 124 years the Church had the status of a missionary country, remaining under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda until November 3, 1908.2 During its century and a quarter of missionary existence, building upon the Catholic colonial vestiges, the Church developed greatly, growing from some 20,000 Catholics to almost 14,000,000.3 Nearly half of the growth resulted from the immigration of foreign born persons of thirty some nationalities among which the Irish, German, Italian and Polish predominated in the order named.4

The heterogeneity and volume of the immigrant influx further complicated the already difficult position of the Church during the mission era. At the outset, without hierarchy, pitifully small in membership and clergy, the Church had to build up a comprehensive organization, erect churches and schools, go into new territories, keeping pace with its own expansion and that of the republic. The onrush of the immigrants was so overwhelming that it not only compelled almost a thousandfold expansion but also made perennially acute two particular problems: providing the immigrant Catholics

3 Ibid., p. 80-81 and 327.
with priests versed in their language and customs and incorporating them into parochial units.

Since many of the newcomers could not be accommodated in parishes whose habitual language was English, new parishes were established to serve the needs of particular nationalities. Because the United States was a mission dependency, every bishop had the power to erect within his diocese mission or quasi-parishes either for a given territory or for a particular nationality. The first exclusively national parish, Holy Trinity, was organized by the German Catholics of Philadelphia with the sanction of Prefect Apostolic John Caroll in November 1789. By the outbreak of the Civil War seventy-two years later, there were German, French, Spanish, Polish as well as English language parishes in the country.

Supplying priests for the various nationalities was more difficult than devising parochial organization for them. The total number of priests did not exceed 1,000 until toward the close of the 1840's. The "want of priests" reported by Father Carroll to the Propaganda in February 1785 was repeated frequently during the mission era by individual bishops and by provincial councils. To meet the constant demand, American bishops strove not only to develop a body of native clergy but also to attract missionaries from Europe. Yet until 1880, the constant insufficiency of clergy was such that each priest ministered to an average of more than 1,000 persons. In 1884, when the Third Plenary Council convened at Baltimore, there were only 6,876 priests for 6,624,000 Catholics.

By this time, the immigration of Polish Catholics had assumed noteworthy proportions. Though the beginnings of Polish settlement in America were made in 1608, when several Protestants landed in Jamestown, Catholic Polish immigration did not start until the war of independence. Yet it was only after the turn of the nineteenth century that Polish Catholics began to settle

5 Ibid., p. 262.
6 Joseph E. Ciesluk, National Parishes in the United States, The Catholic University of America Canon Law Studies No. 190, Washington, Catholic University, 1944, p. 77.
7 Ibid., p. 29; V. J. Fecher, A Study of the Movement for German National Parishes in Philadelphia and Baltimore (1787-1802), Analecta Gregoriana Vol. 77, Series Faenl- tatis Historiae Ecclesiasticae, Sectio B (n. 11), Romae, Typis Universitatis Gregorianae, 1955, p. 10-32.
8 Gerald Shaughnessy, op. cit., p. 262.
11 Miecislaus Haiman, Polish Past in America 1608-1865, Chicago, Polish Roman Catholic Union, 1939, p. 11-54.
in the republic. The earliest arrivals were priests more than thirty of whom came before the Civil War to labor as missionaries among German Catholics, or as teachers in American institutions, or as organizers of religious communities. In the 1850's Polish family groups started arriving and settling together in sufficient number to permit the organization of parishes. By 1860, on the eve of the Civil War, "at least 30,000 Poles" lived in America, scattered throughout the thirty-four states and seven territories then comprising the Union. Consisting mainly of political refugees from Russian Poland and land-seeking farmers from Prussian-Poland, they organized the first Polish societies, wrote and published books and periodicals, and founded parishes to the enrichment of American Catholicism.

The bulk of Polish Catholics, about 2,000,000, immigrated after the war between the States, with perhaps 1,400,000 settling before the close of the mission era in 1908. Coming in ever increasing numbers first from Prussia, then from Russian and Austrian Poland, most of them farmers in search of employment, with little or no schooling, they migrated by thousands in the sixties and seventies, by tens of thousands in the eighties and nineties, and by hundreds of thousands after the turn of the twentieth century. Settling chiefly in the midwestern and eastern states, they congregated largely in the big cities, and only smaller groups went to farms and mines.

Upon arrival in America, Polish Catholics found a predominantly Protestant Anglo-Saxon atmosphere in which the Catholic Church was a minority in the process of growth and organization. They found, for some years at least, no Polish parishes and hardly any priests. Not many were able to overcome the language barrier and join the English language parishes. More, particularly those from Prussian Poland, found it less difficult to enter German parishes. Most set to building new churches in which Polish was the habitual language.

The first Polish parish, Immaculate Conception, was organized in southwestern Texas in 1854 by 100 Silesian families and Father Leopold Moczygemba, a Conventual Franciscan missionary. In the sixties, with the in-

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14 Dr. Mieczysław Szawleski, Wychoditwo Polskie w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki, Lwów, Ossolińskich, 1924, p. 17.
creasing immigration, the number of parishes rose to sixteen; in the seventies it increased to seventy-four; in the eighties it climbed to 170; in the nineties it soared to 330; and in 1905, it reached 500.18

This parochial expansion required a proportionately increasing supply of Polish priests. Their lack was continually felt by the immigrants and the hierarchy alike. In the sixties, bishops in Texas, Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois made urgent appeals for Polish clergy; their petitions were echoed in the seventies by the Ordinaries of Buffalo, Chicago, and Milwaukee.19 In 1872, each of the twenty Polish priests in America ministered to an average of 3,000 to 5,000 persons, three to five times higher than the general average for the country.20 The situation was still acute in 1884, because the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore prescribed that, in accordance with diocesan needs, students in minor seminaries should be instructed in at least one modern foreign language — German, French, Italian, Spanish, Polish, or some other Slavic tongue.21

These circumstances, immigrational and ecclesiastical, combined to form the background for the rise of the Polish Seminary. In their shadow the idea of the institution slowly took shape and finally materialized. This formative stage began in 1870.

In later years, when Father Dąbrowski wrote about the rise of the Polish Seminary, he gave two different versions of its origin. Before the establishment of the seminary, in February 1884, when Father Dąbrowski wrote his first letter to Bishop C. Borgess of Detroit about the possibility of founding the institution in the city, he stated that "... the Bishops of different parts of Poland ..." suggested the idea of erecting the college.22 About five years later, when the seminary was in its third year of existence and Father Dąbrowski was rector of the institution, he wrote a 500 word sketch of the school in English which said: "To Cardinal Ledóchowski belongs the honor of originating the project... He conceived the idea..."23 Father Dąbrowski

22 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated Feb. 21, 1884, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan. When writing English Father Dąbrowski as a rule used the anglicized spelling of his name in the form given above and to be used hereafter whenever the source so indicates.
23 "History of St. Mary's — Cyrill and Methodius Seminary (Polish Seminary) in Detroit, Mich.", in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril an Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
repeated the latter version in 1901, when he wrote a lengthier Polish account of the seminary for Reverend W. Kruszka's Historya Polska w Ameryce.

This fuller statement of the institution's origin subtitled The Idea of Founding the Polish Seminary in America, began as follows:

About 1870 when the Poles began emigrating to America in large numbers, American bishops wrote frequently to Cardinal Ledóchowski, asking him for Polish priests from Rome. Unable to satisfy their request he proposed the project of founding a Polish Seminary in America. He made known his idea to Reverend Leopold Moczygemba ...24

The second of these explanations (and by implication also the first) was rejected as a subsequent rationalization by Father Dąbrowski's biographer, Msgr. Alexander Syski. He pointed out that Miecislaus Cardinal Ledóchowski did not become Prefect of the Propaganda until after the seminary had been in existence for nearly six years. Before that time there was (in Msgr. Syski's opinion) little or no likelihood that "American bishops wrote frequently to Cardinal Ledóchowski, asking him for Polish priests from Rome," as Father Dąbrowski put it. 25 Even though the exiled Polish Cardinal resided in the Eternal City since March 1876, Msgr. Syski chose to hold that Father Dąbrowski himself, contrary to his own later testimony, originated the idea of the Polish Seminary in 1870.

Father Joseph Dąbrowski was born in the village of Żółtańce in Russian Poland on January 27, 1842, the son of a road engineer. 26 After finishing high school in Lublin, he matriculated at the Szkoła Główna (later the University of Warsaw) only to take part, several months later, in the tragic January Uprising of 1863 against Russia. 27 Compelled to leave the country, he made his way through Saxony and Switzerland to Rome where he was one of six original students entering the Papal Polish College, opened in March 1866, with Rev. Peter Semenenko C. R. as rector. 28 After three years of intensive study at the Gregorian University, he was ordained a priest for mission work on August 8, 1869. 29 At the suggestion of Father Leopold Moczygemba, former Conventual Franciscan missionary in Texas, he accepted

26 Baptismal certificate in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
27 " Venerable Saintly Priest. A Hero of Bloody Battles ", The Detroit Journal, 19th Year, [No No.], (Jan. 6, 1903), p. 8, col. 5.
the invitation of Bishop Joseph Melcher and volunteered to labor among the Polish immigrants in the newly erected diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin. 30

Father Dąbrowski landed in New York on December 31, 1869. Several days later, he was in Milwaukee, at St. Francis Seminary, learning English and awaiting his orders from the Bishop. During his brief stay at the diocesan seminary, he wrote two lengthy letters to Father Semenenko, his former rector, at Rome. In the first, written January 22, 1870, he complained about the "lamentable state" of the Polish communities in America owing to the lack of schools and priests. 31 In the second, penned March 16, 1870, he gave a more detailed picture of the Polish settlements, whose population he estimated at 15,000, expressing his grave concern for the faith of the Polish Catholics and suggesting a remedy. 32

This remedy contained the germinal idea of the Polish Seminary. Father Dąbrowski proposed that the Resurrectionist Congregation, in the United States since 1866 and in Canada since 1864, should establish a convent and novitiate at Milwaukee from where it could send missionaries to Polish communities in the Midwest. He also proposed that the Resurrectionists, as a Polish Congregation, establish a secondary school in which Polish aspirants to the priesthood might be prepared for entrance into diocesan theological seminaries. This preparation was to give them such a firm grounding in Polish that they would not forget the language during their lengthy and difficult philosophical and theological studies. For out-of-town students who came to Milwaukee boarding facilities were to be provided in a special dormitory.

There is no conclusive evidence to indicate that Father Dąbrowski may have been influenced in his proposal by a project initiated in Milwaukee less than two years before by a former professor of philosophy at St. Francis Seminary, Rev. John M. Gartner.33 A Bohemian, Father Gartner had left his teaching post and undertaken missionary work among the Slavic Catholics. He conducted a fund campaign in several dioceses, collecting funds for a "Slavic Seminary" which would train priests for the various Slavic nationalities in America. With the help of Fathers A. Lang and F. Heller, he collected almost $ 10,000 and erected a church for Bohemian Catholics in Milwaukee. This church, under the patronage of St. John Nepomucene, served as the headquarters for Father Gartner's Slavic Mission Institute of

31 Dąbrowski to Semenenko, letter dated 22 stycznia 1870, in Resurrection Fathers Archives, Rome, Italy. Photostat copy in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
32 Dąbrowski to Semenenko, letter dated 17 marca 1870, ibidem.
the Sacred Heart until December 1872, when the project was discontinued as no longer necessary.

It is still less probable as well as without any foundation in historical evidence that Father Dąbrowski's proposal was in any way connected with the project of a Polish School considered in 1865 by the Democratic Society of Polish Exiles in New York.34 Proposed by Dr. Samuel Brylantowski, who wrote out the plan in detail, the school was to be a private institution under the administration of a special school board. It was to train good citizens and patriots, and to rest on the Polish language and its literature as the foundations of the institution. Its curriculum plan made no provisions for religious instruction of any kind, although it advocated the teaching of seven languages, various branches of mathematics, history and the sciences, painting, music, dancing, gymnastics and military strategy.

In any event, Father Dąbrowski's suggestion did not lead to the establishment of a Polish secondary school or preparatory seminary in 1870. International in membership and purpose though Polish in origin, the Resurrectionists were unable to spare any more Polish priests for such a project. Their available men were tied up in the Texas and Michigan missions or were serving Poles elsewhere. 35 Besides, they were already conducting the Papal Polish College in Rome. Father Dąbrowski himself, once he received his pastoral appointment from Bishop Melcher, devoted most of his energies to parochial duties at Polonia, Wisconsin, where he remained for twelve years. 36

At the same time, during these years Father Dąbrowski maintained an active interest in the educational needs of Polish Catholics in the United States generally as well as in his parish locally. These needs made themselves felt more and more on the primary and secondary levels during the seventies, as Polish immigration increased by over 40,000 and parochial wants became more pressing. 37 After initial attempts by the Resurrectionist missionaries in Texas, the first permanent Polish parochial school had been opened in Milwaukee in the fall of 1868 with the help of the German School Sisters of Notre Dame. 38 In the early seventies, Father F. Żwiardowski C. R. organized a Polish community of Sisters in Texas to serve the schools there, but the congregation disbanded after several years. 39

34 "Plan Szkoly Polskiej", in File on Komitet Polski w NY Bok 1863-4, Archives and Museum of the Polish Roman Catholic Union, Chicago, Illinois.


36 Dombrowski File, in Green Bay Diocesan Chancery Archives, Green Bay, Wisconsin. Photostat copies in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.

37 Mieczysław Szawleski, op. cit., p. 17.


These activities, like the idea voiced by Father Dąbrowski, reflected a general need that grew more pressing during the decade. The seventies were also a time of sharpened national awareness among the Polish immigrants. Both religious and national consciousness, quickened by the Protestant Anglo-Saxon environment, stimulated among the Poles a desire not only for closer organization on a country-wide level but also for the higher education of their offspring in things Polish. This twofold desire was the subject of frequent discussion and activity among earnest leaders, lay and clerical, during the decade. And Father Dąbrowski took part in both.

Available contemporary records do not show whether Father Dąbrowski was present at the organizational meeting of Polish leaders at Detroit in 1873, when the Polish Roman Catholic Union came into existence at the instigation of Reverend Theodore Gieryk, pastor of St. Albertus. But the major objectives, formulated at this meeting by priests and laymen from various parts of the country, certainly reflected his views. The first among them called for the establishment of secondary schools; others stipulated the founding of a convent, a normal school, and libraries. The adoption of this broad educational program gave a decided impetus to the school movement during the decade.

Father Dąbrowski made a significant contribution to the educational movement in 1874. In May, he began negotiations for the importation of the Polish Felician Sisters from Krakow to staff the parochial school he was building. Six months later the first five nuns came from Poland to America, assuring additional teachers for the parochial schools and promising a steady supply of students for high school and college. In October, when the negotiations were successfully completed and the Sisters ready to start for America, Father Dąbrowski attended the second annual convention of the Polish Roman Catholic Union in Chicago and was elected member of the organization's Senate composed of twelve lay and clerical members. Recognizing the ripeness as well as the need of the moment, the convention adopted a resolution for the establishment of a secondary school and initiated a fund campaign for the purpose.

The project was further advanced at the Union's third convention held in June 1875 at Milwaukee. This assembly assessed every Union member one dollar a year in order to create a fund for the proposed school. It also elected Rev. Leopold Moczygemba, former Conventual Franciscan missionary and Development of the Catholic School System in the United States, New York, Benziger, 1912, p. 314.


40 Mieczysław Haiman, op. cit., p. 36.
in Texas before the Civil War, as the second president of the Union. 43 It was possibly at this
time that Father Dąbrowski and Father Moczygemba exchanged ideas about the possibility
of a Polish seminary in America and discussed the scheme with Reverend Louis Machdzicki,
"past vice-rector of the seminary in Lublin", who came to America in 1875. 44 The con
vention, however, did not make any decisions regarding the specific nature and site of the
proposed Polish school for which members of the Union were to be taxed.

The school project became the subject of earnest discussion in Polish communities, as its
future site, financial support, and faculty staff were considered. Some felt that only a religious
Congregation could maintain such an institution adequately. The Very Reverend E. Funken
C. R., head of the American province of the Resurrectionists in 1874, urged Father B. Bar
rzyński C. R. in Chicago and the authorities of the Congregation in Rome to establish the
institution. 46 His proposal was seconded by Father L. Funcken C. R., rector of St. Jerome's
College in Canada, who saw possibilities for vocations to the Polish missions in the school.
But having taken charge of St. Mary's College near Bardstown, Kentucky, in 1871, the au-
thor-rities of the Congregation were unable to assume a new burden.

The site of the proposed school also provoked discussion. Some wanted an urban location
— Detroit, Chicago, or Milwaukee — where the Poles were settled in larger numbers which
would assure local support and a student body. 46 Others insisted on a country location in
the hope of a land grant from the government or support from colonization companies active
among the Poles. 47 While the controversy continued, Father John Wollowski of Radom,
Illinois, began the construction of a two-story wood building which he hoped to develop into
a high school and eventually into a seminary. Started in 1876 as a grade school, the project
was abandoned after a year for lack of support. 48 Two other contemporary efforts mentioned
by a Polish traveller also failed — in Northeim and Manitowoc, Wisconsin. 49

43 Ks. F. Domański, S. J., " Przyczyny Niepowodzenia w Życiu Ks. Leopolda Moczygemby
44 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated Feb. 21, 1884, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Semi-
nary File, Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan.
45 X. Paweł Smolikowski, C. R., " Początki Kollegium Św. Stanisława w Chicago ", in [00.
Zmartwychwstancy], Kollegium Świętego Stanisława Kostki w Chicago, Illinois, Księga
Jubileuszowa 1914-1915, Chicago, Dziennik, [1915], p. 80-81.
46 Józef Gloskowski, " W sprawie kolegium polskiego w Radomiu ", letter dated 1 września
4.
47 T. Ch., " Gimnazyum Polskie w Radomiu ", undated letter in Gazeta Polska Chicago,
Year 3, No. 40, 21 września 1876, p. 1, col. 3.
48 [Ks. S. Czerniejewski ], Historia Parafji Św. Michała Arch, i Poświęcenie No-wego
Kościola w Radomiu, III., [Niles], [Parafia], 1924, p. 18-19.
49 Henryk Sienkiewicz, " Osady polskie w Stanach Zjednoczonych in Dziela, Wydanie
zbiorowe pod redakcją Juliana Krzyzanowskiego, Warszawa, Państwowy Insty¬tut, 1950,
Vol. 42, p. 265.
Father Moczygemba remained president of the Union for at least three years. Under his leadership, the school project advanced toward realization. The fourth convention, held in 1876 at Chicago, officially selected central Nebraska as the site of the proposed educational institution. By this time, the Union had pledged itself to sponsor Polish colonization to Nebraska on lands offered for sale by the Burlington-Missouri Railroad. 50 Early in 1877 the first colonists, about 300 families, moved to Nebraska, starting a movement that brought Polish farmers to Howard, Sherman and Valley Counties.

The school project did not appear on the agenda of the fifth convention of the Union at Chicago in 1877. By then the Union seems to have decided to establish the school in Nebraska under the direction of the Resurrectionists, with Father Moczygemba as the executor of the decision and future head of the institution. 51 Since the decision had been arrived at without final approval of the Resurrectionist authorities at Rome, it next became imperative to secure this approval before anything else was to be done. This, it seems, could be best assured by a personal trip to Rome where at the same time papal approval might be secured for the undertaking and for the solution of any personal problems, like the transfer from one religious order to another, that Father Moczygemba might have already begun to contemplate.

Such seem to have been the objectives with which Father Moczygemba went to Rome in July 1878. While there, it is likely that he discussed the project with Mieczysław Cardinal Ledóchowski, the Polish primate, residing privately in the Holy City since March 1876. 52 It is also likely that in 1878, as the two men discussed Polish needs in America, "the Cardinal communicated his desire" — the idea of a specifically Polish seminary in America. 53 Aside from Father Dąbrowski's later testimony, no contemporary statement to this effect has been found. In any case, in 1878 or 1879 Father Moczygemba submitted two petitions, one in Latin the other in Italian, to Pope Leo XIII. 54 On January 14, 1879, the pope approved both petitions with a personal inscription on each: Annuimus in omnibus juxta petita. Leo P. P. XIII. The Latin copy was further authenticated by J. B. Aguazzi, a secretary of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, who notarized the petition on February 6, 1879.

51 Mieczysław Haiman, op. cit., p. 48.
54 Moczygemba to Leo XII, two undated petitions in Moczygemba File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
The contents of both petitions were essentially the same, although the wording differed somewhat in the two versions. In effect, Father Moczygemba said that there were over 200,000 Polish Catholics in the United States, that they lacked priests of their nationality, that he desired to build a college or seminary for Polish boys desiring to study for the priesthood, that for this purpose he had already gathered alms, and finally that he desired papal authorization to allocate all his present and future funds for the building of the institution.

Later historians would fret over the meaning of the Latin collegium and the Italian seminario in the two petitions, but to Father Moczygemba the two words meant the same thing: a minor or preparatory seminary for the training of Polish candidates to the priesthood in America. Later historians would also wonder about the exact amount of alms Father Moczygemba had collected by 1879, which in both petitions he designated as "his own" and therefore by implication ruled out any grant from the Polish Roman Catholic Union or donations from other sources.

After receiving papal assent to his petitions, Father Moczygemba remained in Rome for about a year, serving as English confessor at St. Peter's Basilica and successfully arranging for his transfer from the Conventual Franciscan to the Resurrectionists. He made his new obedience on January 23, 1880, and shortly after set out for America as a Resurrectionist. Armed with papal approval of his proposed school, he was prepared to see the project to its completion, following his arrival at Chicago in April 1880.

During the year and a half that Father Moczygemba had spent in Rome several events of importance had taken place among the Poles in America. In some circles the need of a Polish secondary school made itself felt more keenly that ever. In December 1878, Father H. Cichocki C. R. wrote his superiors at Rome about his intention to open a high school in Chicago after Christmas. The effort, however, proved abortive. In March 1879, Reverend C. Kozłowski, pastor in La Salle, Illinois, wrote a letter to the Superior General of the Resurrectionists in Rome, suggesting the establishment of a seminary or novitiate in Chicago. This was a renewal of the suggestion made nine years earlier by Father Dąbrowski from Milwaukee.

56 Mieczysław Haiman, op. cit., p. 53.
58 X. Wacław Kruszka, op. cit., Vol.9, p. 91.
60 Kozłowski to Semenenko, letter dated 3 marca 1879 quoted by X. Wacław Kruszka, op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 58.
At the same time, in other quarters complaints arose against the location of the projected school in Nebraska. The colonization was not prospering as had been expected. The Polish Roman Catholic Union had suffered a decline in membership, and rumors of a rival organization soon to be founded began circulating late in 1879. 61 Father Moczygemba refused to be disheartened by these developments. In June 1880, he bought "about 380 acres" in Howard County, Nebraska, for $1900. 62 And in July 1880 wrote to his superiors at Rome: "The plan or idea of the Polish college will work if we only get started, because intelligent Poles and certain bishops feel the need of such an institution and desire its realization."63

The letter came close on the heels of the General Chapter meeting held by the Resurrectionist authorities at Rome in May and June 1880. At one of the sessions, Very Reverend E. Funcken C. R., superior of the American missions and long-time champion of the idea of a Polish secondary school, renewed his support of the project but suggested that the institution be established in Chicago. 64 His proposal, opposed by some as impracticable, was taken under advisement by the Chapter already burdened by numerous problems.

In August 1880, the rumored rival of the Polish Roman Catholic Union took form and appeared in Philadelphia as the Polish National Alliance. 65 The Polish community in America split into two factions — one supporting the Union with its Polish and Catholic program, the other adhering to the Alliance and its Polish and patriotic areligious viewpoint. With the schism rose increasing objections to the proposed school in Nebraska both from laymen and from priests, who criticized not only the location but also the personnel and policies of the projected institution. 68

This split in Polish ranks, coupled with the reluctance of the Resurrectionist authorities, compelled Father Moczygemba to give up the Nebraska project for the time being. He devoted himself to parochial work in Chicago; the year 1881 found him in Eaton, Wis., organizing a Polish parish under the

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62  Deed Record, Howard County, Nebraska, Book C, p. 243, Office of the County Clerk of Howard County, St. Paul, Nebraska. Father Moczygemba subsequently (in March 1882) purchased sixteen and one-half acres more for $85.00, according to Deed Record, Howard County, Book F, p. 10.
64  Ks. Władysław Kwiatkowski, C. R., Historia Zgromadzenia Zmartwychwstania Pańskiego na stuletnią rocznicę jego założenia 1842-1942, Albano, [Zmartwychwstańcy], [1942], p. 308-309.
patronage of SS. Cyril and Methodius, the Apostles of the Slavs, whose feast had been extended to the universal church the preceding year. 67

Meanwhile, Father Dąbrowski had been concentrating upon the immediate educational needs, as well as the spiritual wants, of his parish. After the arrival of the Felician Sisters in November 1874 and the opening of the parochial school, he devoted much of his time to the publication of educational materials. He started a small printery in the parish and with the help of the Sisters began to publish Polish textbooks for the parochial schools. 68 At least three appeared between 1877 and 1881: a Polish reader (Książka do Czytania dla Szkół Polskich w Ameryce, 1877), a geography (Geografia dla Szkół Polskich w Ameryce, 1879), and an arithmetic book (Nauka Rachunków dla Użytku Polaków w Ameryce Przeznaczona, 1881). 69

By this time, the Felician Sisters, upon the advice of Father Dąbrowski who served as their director, had taken charge of six additional parochial schools — one each in La Salle, IL., Bay City and Detroit, Mich., Otis, Ind., Baltimore, Md. and Buffalo, N. Y. 70 In the spring of 1882, they decided to move their motherhouse from Polonia, Wis., to a more central location in Detroit, where they began the construction of a convent. As the director of the sisterhood in America, Father Dąbrowski not only assisted in the building of the new convent but also transferred his domicile to Detroit, hoping at the same time to repair his failing health in the milder (so he believed) Michigan climate. 71

The new motherhouse, with its convent and training school, was opened in October 1882 at St. Aubin and Fremont streets, across from St. Albertus Church, the only Polish church in the city. Father Dąbrowski made his residence at the mother-house, ministering to the spiritual wants of the Sisters and teaching in the convent boarding school. As founder and director of the school, incorporated as the Seminary of the Felician Sisters, he took part in the training and classical education of Juniorates — candidates too young to be received as postulants into the sisterhood. 72 The seminary was the first Polish institution approaching secondary school level established in the United States.

67 [Harry H. Heming], op. cit., p. 631.
68 Albert H. Sanford, "The Polish People of Portage County", Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at its Fifty-Fifth Annual Meeting Held November 7, 1907, Madison, Society, 1908, p. 266.
69 Copies in Rare Books Collection, St. Mary's College Library Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
71 [S. Felicjanka], op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 103-106.
72 Sister Mary Jeremiah Studniewska, op. cit., p. 143-144.
This achievement, coupled with his earlier activities on behalf of Polish education in America, prepared Father Dąbrowski for the next and most important undertaking of his life. In 1883, Father Leopold Moczygemba C. R. began working on the construction of another new Polish church dedicated to SS. Cyril and Methodius at Lemont, IL, where he had been transferred from Eaton, Wis., the preceding year. 73 Occupied with his new task, the aging fifty-nine year old missionary decided to entrust his Nebraska project to younger hands. His choice fell upon the forty-one year old Felician chaplain and director whom he had known for a quarter of a century.

Details of the understanding reached by the two men are lacking. Referring to this matter in later years, Father Dąbrowski wrote in his brief 350-word English sketch of the Polish Seminary: "When Rev. Moczygemba returned to America he communicated this project to Rev. Joseph Dąbrowski."74 Still later, in 1901, in a lengthier outline penned for Father Kruszka in Polish, he wrote: "Reverend Moczygemba ... being advanced in age, did not feel strong for this task and entrusted the realization of the matter to Rev. Joseph Dąbrowski."75 Even the exact date of the understanding, which at the latest must have occurred early in 1884, is unknown.

At any rate, the understanding placed Father Dąbrowski in charge of the project which, conceived originally by him and promoted subsequently by Father Moczygemba for the most part, was after thirteen years of discussion hardly out of the planning stage, due in part to lack of support and in part to poor planning. Nevertheless, by 1884, one phase of the seminary's formative period ended and another, much shorter, began, leading to the erection and opening of the institution in Detroit.

73 Ks. H. Jagodziński, Zloty Jubileusz Parafji ŚŚ. Cyryla i Metodego w Lemont, Illinois, [Chicago], [Parafia], [1934], p. 8.
74 History of St. Mary's-Cyrrill, and Method Seminary (Polish Seminary) in Detroit, Mich. in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
CHAPTER II. THE FOUNDING

Between 1870 and 1884, the idea of the Polish Seminary had taken shape under the influence of various environmental and human factors. With the abandonment of the Nebraska venture, the long discussed project had neither grounds nor buildings, neither students nor faculty. Yet between 1884 and 1886, Father Dąbrowski succeeded, in spite of difficulties, in assembling these essential elements and in giving them a habitation and a name. This chapter tells how, after taking over Father Moczygemba's stunted venture, Father Dąbrowski established the seminary in Detroit within less than three years.

One of the undisclosed and unknown details of the understanding reached by 1884 between Father Dąbrowski and Father Moczygemba concerned the site of the proposed Polish Seminary. It is known only that the two men agreed on changing the location of the institution from the plains of Nebraska to the streets of Detroit. This change was made partly because the Nebraska colonization failed to develop as successfully as had been hoped by its initiators and partly because, as Father Dąbrowski himself wrote later, Detroit "was centrally located among the main Polish colonies."

In 1884, the leading Polish communities were found in Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, Buffalo, and Cleveland. Though not the largest nor the smallest of the group, the Detroit settlement had grown during the seventies and was attracting Poles in ever increasing numbers during the eighties. The city's established Catholic tradition going back to French foundations in 1701, its expanding industrialism and varied manufactures, its cosmopolitan population in which after 1880 Poles constituted the third largest group — these as well as other factors served as magnets to draw Polish settlers to Detroit.

Polish settlement in Detroit also had had a considerable background behind it. The first indubitably Polish resident of the city was John Zieliński, a member of Ste. Anne's French Catholic parish in 1817. During the

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1 Dąbrowski to Kruszka, letter dated czerwiec 1901 [sic], in X. Wacław Kruszka, Historya Polska w Ameryce, Początek, wzrost i rozwój dziedziny osad polskich w Północnej Ameryce (w Stanach Zjednoczonych i Kanadzie), Milwaukee, Kuryer, 1905, Vol. 2, p. 146.
thirties and forties, several Polish political refugees made their home among the German Catholic residents. The beginnings of Polish folk settlement began in the fifties when also the first Polish priests, Rev. J. Maciejewski and Rev. L. Pawłowski, labored in the city.

It was not until after the Civil War that Polish settlement in Detroit grew large enough to necessitate the formation of the first Polish parish, St. Albertus (Św. Wojciech), which arose in 1872. The following year, the first Polish federated society in America was founded in Detroit under the name of the Polish Roman Catholic Union. In 1879, the coming of the Felician Sisters to teach in St. Albertus parochial school added another attraction to future immigration, and paved the way for the establishment of a convent and orphanage in 1882. The next year, when the second Polish church and school were opened under the patronage of St. Casimir, the number of Polish residents in the city was estimated by some at 15,000 and by others at 16,000. This total was growing rapidly, for toward the end of 1884 it was claimed that Poles were coming to Detroit at the rate of 125 a week.

The two Polish parishes were located in separate parts of the city which were called by their neighbouring German, French and American residents as "Poletown," "Polacktown," and "Polishtown," to distinguish them from the Irish "Corktown" and the German "Dutchtown." The older and larger of the two Polish districts was located on the east side which took in the area « north of Gratiot avenue, east of Beaubien Street, and extending north and northeast to the city limits » at Grand Boulevard and Mt. Elliot. The smaller western district began at about Twentieth Street and extended on both sides of Michigan avenue beyond the city limits at Twenty-Fifth street into Springwells.

At the outset of 1884, when Father Dąbrowski and Father Moczygemba had come to an agreement upon Detroit as the site of the contemplated Polish seminary, the city had a population of about 145,000, less than a third of which was Catholic. The Catholic Detroiters numbered 37,950 individuals or 7,590 families — Irish, German, French, Bohemian, Belgian and Polish.

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They had sixteen churches and fourteen parochial schools with 5,827 pupils. The bishop of the diocese was German-born but American-trained Caspar Borgess residing in Detroit since 1870.

It was to him that Father Dąbrowski turned. Late in 1883, the bishop had written to the Polish monthly in Kraków, Missye Katolickie, for "several Polish young men" willing to minister to the spiritual needs of the Poles in his diocese; he offered to pay their training in the diocesan preparatory seminary he was contemplating to build. Father Dąbrowski's project of providing a body of American-trained priests of Polish nationality for the country at large had something in common with the bishop's desire to promote native vocations in the diocese. Besides, almost a decade earlier, Father T. Gieryk, the second pastor of St. Albertus, had planted a precedent when he had written in his annual report for 1874: "I would suggest it important to build a higher Polish Catholic School (College) ..." In high hopes Father Dąbrowski presented his proposal to the bishop.

The ensuing negotiations, involving correspondence and conferences, began in the last week of February 1884 and, owing to Bishop Borgess' instant interest, closed successfully within less than a month. Father Dąbrowski's first letter, written February 21, in a general way broached the thought of erecting a "college" for preparing Polish youth to the priesthood, as this had been discussed by himself, Father Moczygemba and Father Louis Machdzicki.

The bishop's reply, dated two days later, hailed the idea "with a cordial welcome" and suggested "further consultation." A week later, on March 2, Father Dąbrowski presented in writing a more detailed account of the proposed "ecclesiastical seminary with the complete studies of Philosophy, Theology, Church History, Church Law ... necessary few preparatory classes ..."; he also noted that "Father Moczygemba will arrive the fourth or fifth of March and Father Machdzicki the fifteenth ..."

To this, the Bishop replied with a brief note dated March 3 (Monday), stating that he would be available for consultation "until next Saturday morning" and then after "the evening of the 13th inst.", (Thursday).

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9 Seminary Report Year Ending July 1884, p. 82, Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan.
12 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated Feb. 21, 1884, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan. Hereafter these archives will be referred to by the abbreviation DACA.
14 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated March 2, 1884, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
15 Borgess to Dombrowski, letter dated March 3, [1884], in Copy Book Jan. 2, 1884 - Aug. 4, 1886, p. 887, DACA.
details of the meeting have survived, but it must have taken place in the week of March 3, between Tuesday or Wednesday, the days of Father Moczygemba's expected arrival, and Saturday, the day of the Bishop's departure for Kalamazoo. Apparently, the conference occurred without Father Machdzicki who was to arrive on Saturday, the fifteenth of the month. On Friday, March 14, the day after his return from Kalamazoo, Bishop Borgess gave his final decision in favor of the project.16

The Bishop's letter, which Msgr. Syski called "the foundation stone for the legal existence of the institution"17 stated:

There being at present nearly half a million Catholics of the Polish tongue in the United States of America, and the immigration of Polish people continuing to grow more numerous, it becomes more difficult from year to year to secure a sufficient number of good and zealous pastors for them, owing to the scarcity of priests who are able to instruct them in their nation's language, and minister to their spiritual wants. Your praiseworthy resolution of making the noble effort of establishing a college in the city of Detroit for the education and spiritual training of Polish young men who have a vocation for the priesthood, will be hailed with delight by all who take to heart the spiritual welfare of the Polish Catholics. We, therefore, authorize you to solicit aid for this important undertaking in our diocese, and beg to recommend you to the kind consideration of the Right Reverend Bishops of other Dioceses who may share in the benefit of the institution.18

This institution, as revealed by Father D'browski's correspondence during the negotiations, was to be both a preparatory minor and a theological major seminary.19 Its purpose was to educate a well-trained Polish American diocesan clergy by "preparing Polish youth for the priesthood."20 As a strictly ecclesiastical institution, it was to function under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Detroit, "without whose will and permission nothing could be done."21 The scope of the institution, however, was to be interdiocesan on a country-wide scale, as it was hoped that other American bishops, "having in their respective dioceses Polish population," would help by sending students; bishops in partitioned Poland were counted on to assist the seminary "with required teacher priests."22

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16 Borgess to Dombrowski, letter dated March 14, [1884], in Copy Book Jan. 2, 1881 - Aug. 4, 1886, p. 896, DACA.
17 Ks. Aleksander Syski, Ks. Jozef Dqbrowski, Monografia Historyczna 1842-1942, Orchard Lake, Seminarium, 1942, p. 140.
18 Borgess to Dombrowski, letter dated March 14, [1884], in Copy Book Jan. 2, 1881 - Aug. 4, 1886, p. 896, DACA.
19 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated March 2, 1884, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
20 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated Feb. 21, 1884, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
21 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated March 2, 1884, ibidem, DACA.
22 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated Feb. 21, 1884, ibidem, DACA.
Funds for the building and maintenance of the institution were to come from two sources: Father Moczygemba's "selling of the lots and ground which are destined for this purpose" and from "collections."23 The immediate services of two men were to be available: Father Dąbrowski's who offered himself "entirely for all kind of possible work" and Father Machdzicki's who also "was determined to offer his work, if such an institution would be erected".24 In brief, the proposed seminary was a venture of faith, based largely on Father Dąbrowski's conviction of its necessity; the rest — funds, faculty, students, site, buildings — was to materialize in the course of time.

The first public notice of the contemplated seminary appeared in the local press within five days after the issuance of the Bishop's letter of approval. On Tuesday, March 18, 1884, The Detroit Free Press reported that "Rev. Joseph Dombrowski, who established a convent in this city for the education of nuns to teach in the Polish Catholic Schools, is making arrangements for establishing a seminary in Detroit for the education of Polish Catholic priests."25 Two weeks later, The Michigan Catholic referred to the project as one "which, if successfully carried out, will prove a great blessing to the Polish Catholics of this country and an object of pride and congratulation for the diocese of Detroit"; the paper also noted that since the institution was the first of its kind, "there seems to be no reason why Father Dombrowski's efforts should fail to meet with success".26

News of the project also quickly reached partitioned Poland, where the May issue of Missye Katolickie greeted it as "a matter of extreme importance and desirability for the Polish mission in America"; the periodical pointed out that the seminary was "not to be a private institute, but a purely Polish one, under the administration and jurisdiction of the local bishop", and advised prospective candidates to communicate with Father Dąbrowski. 27

By this time, Father Dąbrowski had advanced the cause of the seminary one or two steps. On March 21, he dispatched a printed circular, with a copy of Bishop Borgess' letter of approval, to members of the American hierarchy with Polish Catholics in their dioceses. The circular briefly explained the seminary project and its acceptance by the bishop of Detroit, invited their episcopal "protection and patronage" and begged for "permission to make

23  op. cit.
24  Ibid.
collections for the Seminary", whose site was about to be purchased and whose erection was to be completed "by the next year."28

Father Dąbrowski's circular also contained a statement that suggested possible influence upon his thinking by Father J. Gartner, one-time proponent of the Slavic seminary, who died in 1877 in Wisconsin. 29 In this statement Father Dąbrowski called attention to the similarities between the Polish and Bohemian languages and said that "in course of time, if desirable, a department for the Bohemian language might be established."30

In the second week of April 1884, Father Dąbrowski selected and purchased the ground for the seminary, choosing a site on Detroit's east side. He bought two and one-tenth acres of land on St. Aubin Avenue between Forest and Garfield Streets, one block north of St. Albertus Church and the Felician motherhouse. On April 12, he paid $ 5,000. for the property to "Julius Stoll and Albertine Stoll his wife and Charles Lempke and Caroline Lempke his wife."31

Several minutes after the transaction, Father Dąbrowski deeded the property to Bishop Caspar H. Borgess, "subject to the payment of two certain mortgages" amounting to $ 4,000 and executed in equal halves ($ 2,000 each) to Charles Lempke and Julius Stoll respectively. 32

The property comprised the southern half of lot forty-six of the old French St. Aubin Farm. It lay just outside the two-mile circle of the city hall and about one mile from the northern city limits at Grand Boulevard. 33 The premises, according to the subsequent recollection of a Polish Detroiter, were part of boggy farm lands « where you could shoot a duck in the spring and later catch crabs and frogs. »34

Nevertheless, the $ 5,000 purchase price of the two and one-tenth acre site did not seem to be excessive. At this time, real estate values on the east side were going up. Single lots on Farnsworth near Riopelle Streets (several blocks away from the seminary site) which the preceding year had sold for $ 300 were bringing $ 500 in May 1884 ; and land which formerly could be

28  Dombrowski to bishops, letter dated March 21, 1884, in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
30  Dombrowski to bishops, letter dated March 21, 1884, in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
31  Stoll and Lempke to Dombrowski, warranty deed, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
32  Dombrowski to Borgess, warranty deed, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
33  "Index Map of the City of Detroit before annexation of new territory in 1885 ", in Manual of County of Wayne Michigan 1930, Detroit, Board of County Auditors, [1930], opposite p. 234.
bought for $500 an acre now sold for not less than $1500. The new car works constructed in that part of the city were attracting residents, and at 200 new dwellings and stores were soon anticipated there. Some of them would be duplications of "the $100 cottage of the Polish refugee", while others would be substantial homes already erected in the vicinity of the proposed seminary.

The money for the immediate purchase of the site did not come, as Father Dąbrowski had intimated in his February letter to Bishop Borgess that it would, from Father Moczygemba's "fund, which could be made from the selling of the lots and grounds which are destined for this purpose." The sale of the Nebraska property could not be effected in time to promote the Detroit purchase on April 12, because two weeks later Bishop Borgess authorized Father Dąbrowski "to negotiate a temporary loan for five thousand dollars ($5,000) for the purpose of paying for the property, bought for the contemplated Polish Seminary."

In August 1884, however, Father Moczygemba succeeded in selling the Nebraska lands for $5,800. How much money he contributed to the erection of the seminary in the beginning is uncertain. A copy of an undated contemporary letter written by Father Dąbrowski between May and September of this year contains the statement: "The ground for the institution has already been purchased and about six thousand dollars have been invested."

Writing about this in later years, Father Dąbrowski left two conflicting accounts: in one he stated that Father Moczygemba "gave $4,000 (four thousand) dollars...", while in the other he reported that "Reverend Moczygemba collected about eight thousand dollars," entrusting it to him for the seminary. This latter report is supported by an anonymous Detroit cor-

37 Dombrowski to Borgess, letter dated Feb. 21, 1884, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
39 Deed Record — Howard County, Liber H, p. 7-8, in Office of the County Clerk of Howard County, St. Paul, Nebraska.
40 Dambrowski to a bishop, undated letter in Father Dambrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan; the word "six" in the text is not quite clear, but seems to have been written over the word "five".
respondent, who wrote in 1886: "We know well that Reverend Moczygemba donated $8,000 to the Polish seminary." 43

The purchase of the seminary site and the approval of Bishop Borgess by no means assured the success of Father Dąbrowski's undertaking. He encountered unexpected hesitation among certain members of the American hierarchy who, as he wrote at this time in reply to one hesitant Bishop, had "encouraged our undertaking, promising help through their own private funds and through collections in their dioceses". 44 Now, one bishop, in his reply to Father Dąbrowski's introductory circular of March 21, expressed grave concern about the feasibility of the project owing to the insurmountability of three obstacles: funds, faculty, and future usefulness.

Father Dąbrowski answered these objections point by point, laying greatest stress upon the necessity of the institution. The Polish Catholics in America needed more than 100 priests immediately, and growing immigration was continually increasing the need. At the same time, the Americanized generations of Polish extraction would provide a great field of action for the seminary. The fact that a "great many bishops encouraged" the undertaking and "Pope Leo XIII likewise gave his permission and blessing and placed the project under the direct control of Right Reverend Bishop of Detroit" also spoke for the necessity of the institution; and he expressed the hope that the forthcoming Third Plenary Council due to convene at Baltimore in November would "hail the erection of the Polish Seminary with delight." 45

Believing in the necessity of his project and undaunted by difficulties, Father Dąbrowski prepared to launch a fund-raising campaign. Meanwhile, in May, the New York stock exchange underwent a crisis which led to a country-wide panic and depression lasting well over two years. During this time, nearly 11,000 banks failed, over 600,000 workers lost their jobs, greater numbers suffered wage cuts, while strikes interfered with the employment of others. This new obstacle slowed down the realization of the seminary, stretching the work of its foundation over nearly three years.

To make matters still more difficult locally, the parishioners of St. Albertus in Detroit had undertaken the erection of a new large church in March 1884. 46

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44 Dombrowski to a bishop, undated letter in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.

45 Loc. cit. Another letter, this one public, in which Fr. Dąbrowski answered similar objections and explained the nature and purpose of the Polish Seminary he had in mind, was written April 13, 1884, and published in the Polish American press: "Do Szanownego Duchowieństwa Polskiego", letter in Oazeta Polska Chicago, Vol. 12, No. 17, (24 kwietnia 1884), p. 2, col. 1-3.

The new structure, planned to seat 2,500 persons, was expected to cost $75,000 but ended by costing $125,000. To meet this expense, Rev. D. Kolasiński initiated an intensive fund-raising campaign in eastern "Polishtown". In the western district Rev. P. Gutowski, the pastor of St. Casimir's, was busy trying to pay off the debt on the church and school blessed in April of the preceding year.

Yet in spite of these additional drawbacks, Father Dąbrowski refused either to postpone or to suspend his undertaking. During the difficult time of the depression, by campaigning and borrowing he tried to keep at least a trickle of money flowing into his seminary fund. In September 1884, he secured a $4,000 loan from Father Moczygemba for "the Polish Seminary of SS. Cyrillus and Methodius in the City and Diocese of Detroit."47 Then he summoned architect Peter Dederich Jr. to draw plans for a four-story brick Romanesque building to cost about $35,000.48

In January 1885 the prospects brightened considerably as Father Dąbrowski gained two helpers for his undertaking. One of them was the aged Father Moczygemba, who applied for admission to the diocese of Detroit "to dedicate the remainder of my life to the education of candidates to the clerical state in the Polish College to be erected in our city."49 Bishop Borgess gladly accepted the application, contingent however upon the consent of Father Moczygemba's religious superiors in the Resurrectionist Congregation. As this permission was not secured until October 1887, Father Moczygemba's personal help at this stage was somewhat limited to periods when he could break away from his parochial duties in Lemont, Illinois. 50

The second helper, on the other hand, proved very useful to Father Dąbrowski for one year and a half during this foundation phase. He was Father Anthony Jaworski C. S. Sp., a member of the Holy Ghost Congregation. On January 30, he obtained from Bishop Borgess special certification which recommended him to American bishops as a "worthy priest" collecting funds "in the interest of the contemplated college for the education of Polish candidates for the priesthood." 51 While Father Dąbrowski's fund-raising trips were limited by his duties at the Felician motherhouse, Father

47 Moczygemba to the Polish Seminary, certificate dated March 1888 [sic], in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
48 Borgess to Moczygemba, letter dated Jan. 15, 1885, in Copy Book No. 8, June 27, 1881 - Apr. 30, 1887, p. 335, DACA.
51 Borgess to Jaworski, letter dated Jan. 30, 1885, in Copy Book No. 8, June 1881 - Apr. 30, 1887, p. 334, DACA.
Jaworski was able to remain on the road for longer periods and to visit, even the most distant Polish settlements in Texas.52

In spite of the depression, the trickle of money brought by the campaign was steady and encouraging enough to permit the breaking of ground for the seminary in the spring of 1885. On Tuesday, May 19, ground was broken "on the west side of St. Aubin avenue ... near St. Albertus' new Church" which was close to completion. 53 The construction work was under the direction of A. Dalecki and J. Begrin, who had built the Felician Mother-house and St. Casimir church. The seminary structure was to be completed in the fall and, according to reports, opened under the directorship of Father Dąbrowski.

The architect's sketch called for a large Three-wing, U-shaped edifice with entrances from three sides. For the present, however, owing to lack of funds, only the central frontal portion of the building was to be erected to launch the seminary into existence. With time and additional funds, the two side wings would be constructed to complete the structure as originally planned.

As the building of the seminary foundations proceeded through the next three months, Detroit extended its city limits by 6.1 square miles on May 21, the new St. Albertus Church ("the largest Polish church in America") was blessed on July 14, and Slavic Catholics throughout the world began celebrating the 1000 anniversary of the missionary labors of SS. Cyril and Methodius. 54 Polish Catholics in America also joined in observing this millennial jubilee.

As a contribution to this world-wide observance, members of the Polish clergy decided to honor the Apostles of the Slavs in Detroit with a special celebration to be climaxed by the laying of the cornerstone of a seminary named after SS. Cyril and Methodius. The day chosen for the celebration was Wednesday, July 22.

The jubilee ceremonies began at nine o'clock in the morning with a solemn Mass in the chapel of the Felician motherhouse. They were concluded in the afternoon with the laying of the cornerstone at the seminary site. 55

The cornerstone ceremonies began shortly after two o'clock. Four Polish organizations — the Kosciuszko Guard, the St. Joseph, St. Albertus and St. Stanislaus Kostka Societies — attired in full regalia formed in parade at St. Albertus Church at St. Aubin and Fremont Streets. From there, led by marshals T. Żółtowski and J. Kulwicki, they marched sixteen blocks down St. Aubin to Gratiot Avenue, where they met the episcopal party which included Bishop C. Borgess of Detroit and Bishop S. Ryan of Buffalo.

Then, led by Stystal's Band, the procession reformed and marched back up St. Aubin Street, escorting the bishops to the seminary. Along the route, the houses were decorated with Polish and American colors and with evergreens in honor of the jubilee. When the procession came to the Felician Mother-house at Fremont, across the street from St. Albertus Church, it halted temporarily while the bishops entered the chapel to vest for the ceremony.

The entire procession, enlarged by the Felician Sisters and the orphans under their charge, then went one block further to St. Aubin and Garfield where the seminary foundations lay. Above them floated the white and gold papal banner, with the tiara and keys. All around, the campus and streets were crowded with Polish and German Catholics of the city and delegates from Polish communities in other cities — Chicago, Buffalo, Brooklyn, Pittsburgh, and New York.

Thirty-six priests from various parts of the country were present. Seventeen of them were Polish, seven Irish, six German, four French, two Bohemian, and one Swedish. The laying of the cornerstone began, with Bishop Ryan officiating and Bishop Borgess assisting. Two small children, Albert Maćkowiak and Joanne Paczkowska, dressed in Polish costumes, brought the hammer and trowel to the bishop. He blessed the stone which bore the inscription: "Jubileum SS. Cirilli et Methodi 885-885. Die 22 Julii 1885." Then a signed scroll was deposited in the stone and sealed up. The document briefly recorded the cornerstone ceremony, called attention to the 1000 anniversary of the missionary labors of the Apostles of the Slavs, and dedicated the institution to their patronage as a token of esteem. The ten signers of the document were all priests: J. Dąbrowski (Mich.), C. Domagalski (Mich.), J. Pitas (N. Y.), H. Klimecki (N. Y.), S. Marcinkowski (N. Y.), F. Ciszek (N. Y.), A. Jaworski C. S. Sp. (Mich.), P. Gutowski (Mich.), S. Wieczorek (Wis.), and E. J. Słowikowski (Wis.).

57 "A Noble Work op. cit., p. 3, col. 4.
58 Dąbrowski et al., document dated 22 lipca 1885, in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
As the dedicatory scroll was being sealed up, the Kosciuszko Guard fired a salute and the church bells of St. Albertus pealed jubilantly. Then followed two addresses: one in English by Rev. Dr. C. Riley, pastor of St. Patrick Church and Detroit's most eloquent Catholic preacher, and another in Polish by Rev. U. Raszkiewicz of Otis, Indiana, the senior member of the Polish clergy in America. The ceremony closed with a reception for the clergy in the Felician academy.

After the ceremony, Father Dąbrowski said to a reporter in an interview: "...Heretofore, we have been obliged to procure Polish priests from Europe, but they cannot speak English and cannot do what a native American might... I deem the erection of this seminary more necessary than the building of expensive churches." 60

The local papers described not only the ceremonies but also the partly finished building and its proposed completion. To cost between $40,000 and $50,000, the structure was to have four stories with a high basement, a central dome rising 152 feet from the ground, and a two-acre campus. Steam-heated throughout, it was to be 250 feet long and 150 feet wide. The basement was to hold the boiler, store-rooms and kitchen; the first floor—a chapel (60 x 120 x 25 feet), administration office, parlor, and faculty quarters; the second floor—class rooms, study halls, and some student rooms; the third floor—library, museum, laboratories and some student rooms; the fourth floor—student dormitories. At least one-third of the building was to be completed in October and made ready for occupancy in January 1886. 61

These expectations did not materialize. The lack of funds, which apparently had compelled Father Dąbrowski to plan on completing and opening only a part of the projected building at first, continued to make itself felt increasingly after the dedicatory ceremony. The fund-raising efforts of Father Jaworski, who again set out to distant parts, and of Father Dąbrowski, who canvassed Polish communities nearer Detroit, were hampered by the depression. As students began applying for admission to the seminary, Father Dąbrowski determined to visit partitioned Poland in the fall in the hope of winning the support of Polish bishops for the rising institution. 62

The trip, however, had to be cancelled, because a new obstacle, almost as injurious to the completion of the seminary as the lack of funds, made its unexpected appearance at Father Dąbrowski's door. Known as the Kola-

60 "A Noble Work", op. cit., p. 3, col. 4.
siński Affair, it had been brewing for several months, finally boiling over in November 1885; it continued to simmer with irregular unpredictable eruptions, fed by sacerdotal disobedience, lay pretensions to parochial authority, national animosity, personal vituperation, accidental homicide, the example of contemporary French trustee troubles in the city, and, last but not least, newspaper sensationalism. All of this combined to produce the most serious Polish disorders in the history of Detroit, complete with riots and arrests, excommunications and interdicts. 63

Father Dąbrowski and Father Jaworski, and with them the seminary, became involved in the affair and its distasteful publicity late in November 1885, when Bishop Borgess appointed the two priests to the temporary care of St. Albertus parish. 64 They were to succeed Father D. Kolasiński who had been suspended for various irregularities. The suspended pastor challenged the bishop's authority and refused to leave the rectory for four months, until forced by a court order to do so. When Father Dąbrowski, as the new temporary pastor, tried to officiate in the parish church, he encountered an outburst of rioting and attacks upon his person at the hands of supporters of the suspended priest. As a result, two days later, December 4, 1885, Bishop Borgess interdicted the church and forbade any services in it.

The deadlock between Father Kolasiński and the bishop created a ferment which split the parish into two hostile factions that periodically fought each other on the streets and in the press, creating antagonisms that lasted for years. During the early months of 1886, Father Dąbrowski gradually won most of the parishioners to his side as he started a mission and a school for them in the Felician Mother-house. 65 This in turn necessitated the enlargement of the Mother-house in the spring to accommodate the loyal Catholics of St. Albertus.

While this was happening, work on the seminary practically came to a standstill. The unsavory publicity attending the Kolasiński affair proved to be an ordeal by fire for the rising institution, undermining popular confidence in it by the circulation of wildest rumors and charges. Raised by the Kolasiński adherents, one of these accusations charged Father Dąbrowski with the usurpation of St. Albertus parish for the purpose of financing the seminary and the Felicians. 66

In spite of these setbacks, Father Dąbrowski refused to give up the im-

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63 George Pare, The Catholic Church in Detroit, Detroit, Richard, 1951, p. 556-558.
64 Borgess to Dombrowski, letter dated Nov. 30, [18]85, in Copy Book No. 8, June 27, 1881 - Apr. 30, 1887, p. 533, DACA.
periled project. Once again, he modified his building plans with a view to opening the seminary with only two of the four floors available for immediate occupancy. Early in May, apparently in the hope of gaining additional revenue, he copyrighted his Polish booklet on gardening which was published shortly under a pseudonym. 67

Determined to open the seminary in the fall of 1886, Father Dąbrowski decided to go to Europe for faculty members and, if possible, for funds as well. He wrote to Father J. Sebastyański, a Jesuit missionary in Nebraska, for a letter of introduction to the Jesuit superior in Kraków from whom he hoped to secure professors for the institution. 68 The missionary not only complied with the request but also penned a special note to Kraków, urging the acceptance of Father Dąbrowski's proposal.

Toward the end of May, Father Dąbrowski set out on his four-month mission with episcopal permisión and blessing. He carried with him not only Father Sebastyański's letter of recommendation but also Bishop Borgess' authorization "to deliberate with the ... Bishop of Poland about suitable priests who might wish and be able to fill administrative and teaching posts in the Polish Seminary in our city"; in addition, he received from the bishop the power of "adopting two Polish priests for our diocese", apparently to take charge of St. Albertus parish. 69

During Father Dąbrowski's absence, his place at the Felician Mother-house and at the St. Albertus mission was taken by Father C. Domagalski, pastor of St. Mary's in Parisville, Michigan. To enable Father Domagalski to make his transfer, Father Moczygemba C. R. took charge of Parisville having obtained a leave of absence from Lemont.

The Kolasiński affair abated somewhat, although many of the parishioners still refused to obey the bishop but continued to uphold their former pastor's cause after his departure from the city, refusing the obedient parishioners access to the church. The bishop on his part not only maintained the interdict but also on August 23 excommunicated "each and every one ... who directly or indirectly took part in the riotous demonstrations of the 25th of December 1885, and still continues in rebellion to our Episcopal Authority ..."70

67 "Stanisław Andrzejczak, Ogrodnictwo dla Wszystkich, krótko, jasno i przystępnie dla Użytku i Pożytku domowego ułożone, Detroit, [author], 1886, 96 p. Copy in Rare Book Collection, St. Mary's College Library Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan; the copyright application is in Father Dąbrowski File, SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.

68 X. Władysław Sebastyański, "Misja Miedzy Polakami w Północnej Ameryce, Pamiętnik", Misye Katolickie [sic], Vol. 22, [No No.], (Marzec 1903), p. 81-82.


70 Borgess to parishioners of St. Albert's [sic], letter dated August 13, [18]86, in Copy Book No. 8, June 27, 1881 - Apr. 30, 1887, p. 697-698, DACA.
The seminary project, meanwhile, subsidized "almost exclusively by Polish contributions ... from Texas, Wisconsin (Polonia, Stevens Point) and other states," continued under slow construction toward the modified goal set by Father Dąbrowski before his departure for Europe. Construction was temporarily interrupted on July 8, when W. Sztybert, a Kolasiński adherent who had climbed upon the seminary framework, fell from the structure to the ground and killed himself.72

On the same day, the seminary suffered a real loss when Father Jaworski received permission from Bishop Borgess to disassociate himself from the project and to return to his Congregation.73 Differences of opinion between himself and Father Dąbrowski led to the withdrawal. The nature of these differences is not indicated in available official documents. A contemporary newspaper account stated that on one occasion the two men had disagreed over the advisability of publishing the names of donors to the seminary in the Polish press; Father Jaworski had favored such a procedure, while Father Dąbrowski (whose view prevailed) had opposed it.74

Details of Father Dąbrowski's sojourn in Europe are meagre. First he stopped at Rome where, it seems, he arranged for the subsequent arrival of two future faculty members who were then making their theological studies: one was V. Buhačzkowski, the other M. Barabasz.75 While staying at the Polish Pontifical College, his Alma Mater, it is possible that he also conferred with Cardinal Ledóchowski about the state of the seminary at this time.

The remainder of his European stay Father Dąbrowski spent in partitioned Poland, trying to win episcopal support for his seminary. He spoke about the undertaking also with the Jesuit superior in Kraków, Father S. Załęski S. J.,; for some reason however, he did not ask for Jesuit teachers but for information about diocesan priests who might be available for the seminary in Detroit.76 Father Załęski thereupon recommended Rev. V. Bronikowski who at the moment was unattached. Soon after another candidate was found in the person of Rev. H. Barański. Both were released by the archbishop of Kraków to the diocese of Detroit for a four-year period — Father Bronikowski to teach dogma and Father Barański to lecture on moral theology.77
It is possible that at this time Father Dąbrowski also established contacts with several Polish bishops who later helped to enrich the seminary library with contributions of books from their personal collections. 78 Among these prelates were Archbishops A. Dunajewski of Kraków and I. Isakowicz of Lwów, and Bishop J. Pelczar of Przemyśl, a classmate of Father Dąbrowski at the Polish Pontifical College in Rome during the sixties.

After visiting the Felician headquarters in Kraków, as the chaplain and director of the American province of the sisterhood (a post he held until his death), Father Dąbrowski left Poland early in September, returning to Detroit on the fourteenth with the two priests from the diocese of Kraków, Fathers H. Barański and V. Bronikowski. 79 They were appointed to assist Father Dąbrowski both with the seminary project as future professors and at St. Albertus as temporary assistants.

Upon arrival, Father Dąbrowski found the parochial situation at St. Albertus still unsettled, Father Jaworski, C. S. Sp. gone, and the seminary not ready for occupancy. To complicate matters, several students applied for admission to the institution. Assembling the youths temporarily under his own roof in the chaplain's cottage located on the Felician grounds, he set to work with them on the completion of the seminary. One of the students, Francis Mueller, recalled in later years how "he helped lay the floors" in the seminary halls. 80

Finally by December, the first two floors as well as the basement of the building were ready for occupancy. The loyal parishioners of St. Albertus who had accepted Father Dąbrowski's leadership contributed over $ 500 for the essential furnishing of the school. 81 And, at long last, on Thursday, December 16, 1886, the seminary was ready for its official opening.

The dedicatory ceremonies described in the local press, though impressive, were less imposing than those accompanying the laying of the cornerstone one year and a half earlier. 82 They began at nine o'clock in the morning, when members of the St. Albertus and St. Stanislaus Kostka Societies met the bishop's carriage at St. Aubin and Willis Streets, and escorted its occupants — Bishop Borgess and his secretary, Rev. M. Dempsey — to the doors of the seminary two blocks away.

81 [S. Felicjanka], op. cit., Vol. 3, p. 194.
This was the first time in over a year that the bishop put in an appearance in eastern "Polishtown", since the outbreak of the disorders at St. Albertus which still remained closed. A crowd estimated at 3,000 persons was on hand to greet the bishop, some of them hoping to hear news that would bring about the opening of the church.

At the seminary, seventeen priests, led by Father Dąbrowski, met the bishop near the entrance; fifteen were Polish, one Bohemian and one Swedish. After vesting, the bishop passed through the edifice, blessing the basement and the first and second floors. Following this, Father Dąbrowski celebrated a solemn high Mass, assisted by Fathers H. Barański and W. Tilek as deacon and subdeacon, Father M. Dempsey as master of ceremonies, and the students as acolytes. A mixed choir under the direction of Prof. A. Brzozowski sang a Latin mass.

After the sacrifice, Father C. Domagalski of Parisville preached in Polish while Bishop Borgess spoke in German. Both stressed the importance of the seminary and appealed to the listeners for its continued support. Neither made any reference to the troubles resulting from the Kolasiński affair.

After the ceremony, the bishop went to the seminary library where he received the twelve students of the new seminary in audience. The "bright and intelligent looking young men from all parts of the country" addressed the bishop in English, Latin, and Polish, and sang a hymn in Polish. Francis Mueller delivered the Latin, while John Mueller gave the Polish address. Bishop Borgess spoke to the students in English, pointing out that "their sacred duties are to strengthen the faith in the Catholic religion and to disseminate intelligence among their countrymen."84

The bishop then took dinner in the company of the eighteen priests attending the ceremony. The fifteen Polish priests in attendance included J. Dąbrowski, H. Barański, V. Bronikowski (all three of the seminary), P. Gutowski (Detroit), C. Domagalski (Parisville), A. Szklorzyk (Alpena, Mich.), M. Matkowski (Bay City, Mich.), S. Ponganis (Grand Rapids, Mich.), S. Wieczorek and F. Orzechowski (Toledo, Ohio), U. Stanowski (St. Louis, Mo.), F. Szulak S. J. (Chicago), Z. Woźni (La Salle, IL), U. Raszkiewicz (Otis, Ind.), and J. Pitas (Buffalo). 85

The opening of the seminary was hailed by the clergy and the press as a significant event. Bishop Borgess warmly commended the new institution to the Poles, while Father Domagalski pointed out that the seminary provided Polish Catholics with "an opportunity to educate their priests at home."86 The Evening News stated that the seminary was "the first of its kind in Amer-

84  "Peace in Poland ", op. cii., p. 8, col. 1.
84  "Polish Priests ", op. ext., p. 2, col. 5.
81  "Peace in Poland ", op. cit., p. 8, col. 1.
ica", while the Detroit Evening Journal stressed the fact that "more than a year ago the Polish church of Detroit recognized the importance of instituting a seminary for the education of Polish priests."87 A contemporary Polish weekly summed up the situation by saying that the opening of the seminary was "an important event for the entire Polish emigration in America."88

Thus, after passing through a formative stage of sixteen years, the Polish Seminary finally came into existence as an expression of something for which the Polish Catholics in America were ripe. During the seventies, the idea of the seminary had slowly taken shape but failed to materialize. Its final realization began early in 1884, when Father Dąbrowski of Detroit took charge of the project and, after three difficult years, carried it to successful completion in December 1886. Truly a venture of faith in its origin and founding, the seminary was to continue as such in its subsequent development.

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CHAPTER III. FIRST FRUITS

The first four years of the seminary's existence were crucial. They were spent in perfecting the institution's organization, in financing its growth, and in combating the controversies of the time — activities made all the more difficult by various internal and external obstacles. Yet, these years also brought forth the seminary's first fruits — priests and publications. How this happened, between December 1886 and December 1890, will be told in this chapter.

The perfecting of the seminary's organization was one of the major activities that occupied Father Dąbrowski's attention from the moment the institution opened. One of its aspects called for the creation of a stable and competent faculty.

On December 16, 1886, when the seminary officially opened its doors, the faculty consisted of three men: Father Dąbrowski, the rector, and Fathers H. Barański and V. Bronikowski. Of the three, two had had previous teaching experience: Father Dąbrowski in the Felician Academy, and Father Bronikowski in Vienna, Bucharest and Kraków.1 Father Barański had done parochial work in the diocese of Krakow before coming to America.2

This first faculty seems to have had a provisional character. Fathers Barański and Bronikowski were loaned to the bishop of Detroit for a four-year term, apparently for service at St. Albertus parish as well as at the seminary. In addition, Bishop Borgess appears to have entertained the idea that the direction of the seminary was to be placed in other hands than those of Father Dąbrowski. Whether this notion originated with the bishop himself or with Father Dąbrowski, the available sources do not clearly indicate.

In any event, since Father Dąbrowski's visit to Poland had proved only partly successful, that is, it had brought two Polish priests to the diocese but had not secured from Polish bishops suitable priests to undertake the task of supervision and teaching in the seminary, the bishop next acted on his

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On January 6, 1887, three weeks after the opening of the seminary, Bishop Borgess dispatched a petition to the Very Rev. A. M. Anderledy, Superior General of the Jesuits, asking him "to take charge of the Seminary." 4

In this petition, the bishop pointed out the possibility of using the present two professors for parochial duties at St. Albertus which "may soon be opened", hinting at the presence of discord among the faculty; the bishop wrote: "Being informed, that with your kind consent some Rev. Fathers of the Society might be spared in Cracow, I beg you to consider this matter ..." 5

The general, however, expressed regret at his inability to comply with the bishop's request: "Our Polish Fathers are for their numbers so overweighted, that it will be impossible for me to withdraw any of them from their own country ..."; at the same time, he suggested that the bishop approach "the Polish Congregation, known by the name of 'Priests of the Resurrection'." 6

Whether Bishop Borgess acted on this suggestion is not clear. But even if he had, the results would most likely have been negative. The general chapter of the Resurrectionists held at Rome in January 1887 accepted with approval the report of Very Rev. E. Funcken C. R., the American provincial. One of his recommendations for the immediate future of the Congregation in the United States was that the Resurrectionists refrain from accepting any new posts, "even if the Polish Seminary in Detroit were to be offered to them."

Consequently, the seminary remained in Father Dąbrowski's care, whether he had anticipated such a result or not. Even though he had no special training for the position of a seminary executive, he was not without qualifications for the rectorship. A priest with seventeen years' experience in America, a successful pastor and a still more successful director of the Felician Sisterhood, he had displayed executive ability. And his activities on behalf of the seminary during its formative stage showed his resourcefulness and made him better informed than any other Polish priest in America to conduct the seminary.

Nevertheless, Father Dąbrowski began his rectorship weighted down with the added responsibilities of Felician director (which he shouldered until his death) and of temporary pastor of the turbulent, interdicted St. Albertus parish. On March 19, 1887, he was relieved of the pastoral obligations which.

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3 Borgess to Dombrowski, letter dated May 5, [1886], in Copy Book No. 8, June 27, 1881 - Apr. 30, 1887, p. 644-645, DACA.
4 Borgess to Anderledy, letter dated Jan. 16, 1887, in loc. cit., p. 793, DACA.
5 Loc. cit.
6 Anderledy to Borgess, letter dated Feb. 1887 [sic], in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, DACA.
were imposed upon Father Bronikowski, while Father Barański was appointed assistant at the parish. Both priests, however, were to continue teaching at the seminary, while devoting most of their time to the parish.

This arrangement failed to turn out successfully, for less than a month later Father Barański left the diocese of Detroit as well as the seminary in which he had taught for only four months. When Father Dąbrowski tried to secure the services of Mr. John Lemke, a Polish Detroiter studying for the priesthood and teaching Greek in the diocesan seminary at Monroe, Bishop Borgess refused to authorize the transfer. Father Dąbrowski, therefore, renewed his efforts to bring newly-ordained Father V. Buhaczkowski from Rome, while in the meantime obtaining the temporary services of unknown local teachers to finish out the school term in June.

The departure of Father Barański and the appointment of Father Bronikowski as pastor of St. Albertus gave occasion to a rumor which even found its way to Poland — namely, that the institution had been compelled to close its doors for lack of professors.

Father Buhaczkowski came to the seminary in May or June of 1887 and remained a regular full-time professor for the next thirty-some years, assuming the post of rector after Father Dąbrowski’s death in 1903. In the fall of 1890, Father M. Barabasz arrived from Louvain to join the faculty for two years.

Others who taught at the seminary during this initial four-year period were: Mr. F. Dukat, Dr. Charles Laskowski, Dr. Simon Lubowiecki, and Mr. A. McClellan. It seems that the following also taught temporarily either on a part-time or a full-time basis: "a visiting Englishman", Father Z. Łuczycki, Father L. Moczygemba, and Father M. Możejewski.
Writing sometime in 1889, Father Dąbrowski stated that "all the professors except English teacher [sic] are the students of Roman seminaries ... English is taught by a competent professor a graduate of an American college. The earlier reference was to himself and Father Buhaczkowski; the latter to Mr. F. Dukat, a Polish Detroiter who was an alumnus of the Jesuit Detroit College (now the University of Detroit).

The backgrounds of several other professors are also known, at least in part. Father Barabasz, the vice-rector in 1890, obtained his doctorate in Rome and also studied in Paris and Louvain; Dr. Charles Laskowski was a graduate of a "Roman University"; Dr. Simon Lubowiecki "studied classical philology in the German universities"; Mr. A. McLellan was "the superintendent of adult education" in Detroit. 21

Besides teaching, the rector and the professors of the seminary engaged in other activities for the promotion of knowledge and devotion. In 1889, Father Dąbrowski wrote his booklet on the passion of Christ which was published the following year by the seminary, along with other devotional works reprinted from originals issued in partitioned Poland. 22

Other members of the faculty, lay and clerical, took part in the cultural activities of the Polish community in Detroit. They presided at patriotic gatherings, spoke at anniversary celebrations, and assisted in promoting musical and literary presentations. 23

Another aspect of organizational activity concerned the students. According to most contemporary newspaper accounts, the seminary opened with twelve students. 24 Writing three weeks later to the Jesuit Superior General, Bishop Borgess gave the number of pioneer students as nine, a total supported by the Felician Sisters' reports sent to Krakow about the same time. 25

Father Dąbrowski left conflicting accounts which were penned later. About 1889, he wrote that the seminary opened "with only eleven students," 26

22  X. J. D., Narzędzia i Miejsce Męki Pańskiej w Najwierniejszych Obrazkach i Opisach Przedstawione z Uwagami o Męce Pańskiej i Mszy Św. oraz z Dołączeniem Stacyj, Detroit, Seminaryum, 1890, 168 p., in Rare Book Collection, St. Mary's College Library Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
Twelve years later, he reported to Father Kruszka that only "six students were present in the beginning"; and then Father Dąbrowski went on to mention only five by name: John Miller, Ernst Helly, Maximilian Kotecki, Joseph Letownik, and Felix Kieruj. 27 To this list of pioneer students must be added the name of Francis Mueller, who made that claim personally at the time of Father Dąbrowski's death. 28

Whatever was the correct number of the original students — six, nine, eleven or twelve — it is presently impossible to determine owing to the lack of enrollment records. At any rate, though slowly, the student body grew from the very beginning. About six weeks after the opening, there were eighteen students in the institution. 29 By the end of the school year in June 1887, the students numbered twenty-two. 30

Statistics for this period, though fragmentary, indicate an uneven growth of the student body. The fall term of 1887 opened with twenty-five students but closed with twenty-three. 31 The scholastic year for 1888-89 ended with thirty-four students. 32 The fall semester of 1889 began with forty-four pupils and ended in June 1890 with sixty-five. 33

Little is known about the backgrounds of the students during this period. Writing about six weeks after the opening of the seminary, Father Dąbrowski stated that fifteen of the eighteen pupils were local boys, while only three came from outside the city. 34 It is quite likely that during this stage Detroiter predominated in or at least formed a considerable proportion of the enrollment.

Most of the students were apparently born in partitioned Poland and came to the seminary with varying amounts of schooling. Father Dąbrowski kept publicizing the institution in Poland to attract prospective seminarians,

27 Dąbrowski to Kruszka, letter dated Czerwiec 1901 [sic], in X. Wacław Kruszka, Historya Polska w Ameryce, Początek, wzrost i rozwój dziejowy osad polskich w Północnej Ameryce (w Stanach Zjednoczonych i Kanadzie), Milwaukee, Kuryer, 1905, Vol. 2, p. 147.
29 Dąbrowski to unknown Resurrectionist, letter dated 29 stycznia 1887, in Resurrectionist Archives, Rome, Italy.
34 Dąbrowski to unknown Resurrectionist, letter dated 29 stycznia 1887, in Resurrectionist Archives, Rome, Italy.
one of whom accused him in the press of enticing young men to America " for pauper's bread. 

"35 After the first year, Father Dąbrowski also began publicizing the institution in the Polish American press, after one of the newspapers had complained about the lack of information about the seminary. 36

Information concerning student life at the seminary at this time is also scanty. Writing about 1889 Father Dąbrowski stated:

The seminary embraces a classical and theological course. In their plan of studies and discipline, they follow exactly the Roman colleges ... In philosophical and theological department the Latin language is used only. In the classical département [sic] the English and Polish languages are used. 37

The departmental divisions, necessitated by wide differences in the scholastic backgrounds of the students, grew with each passing year. Classes were added as the need arose. A visitor to the seminary reported in June 1888 that among the twenty-three students there were five clerics. 38 Two years later, eighteen clerics were reported in a student body of over sixty. 39

The division of students into preparatory and seminary departments was responsible, most likely, for the addition of a second official name to the institution which was originally dedicated to SS. Cyril and Methodius. As early as 1888, the Detroit City Directory listed not only "St. Cirill and Mettiodus Seminary (Polish)" but also "St. Mary's Seminary (Polish-Catholic)" — both at St. Aubin and Forest Avenues. 40 Father Dąbrowski, writing shortly after, referred to the institution as "St. Mary's — Cyrill and Method Seminary (Polish Seminary) in Detroit, Mich. "41

St. Mary's apparently was the name chosen for the preparatory department of the institution. The choice of this name was ascribed in a later report to an accident, in which a worker was killed while installing a statue.

40 [R. L. Polk], Detroit City Directory for 1888, Detroit, Polk, 1888, p. 88-89.
of the Blessed Virgin above the central entrance to the school. 42 In any case, the institution was generally and popularly known as the Polish Seminary, both in Polish and other circles. A news report for October 1889 stated that classes had begun at the seminary on the sixth with a three-day retreat conducted by Father F. Szulak, S. J. 43 A visitor, who stopped at the seminary shortly after, remarked about the physics and chemistry laboratories and library facilities. 44 The following year, in December, as the institution observed the anniversary of its opening, the press reported that the seminary consisted of theological and philosophical departments, while the high school already had four classes; among the more than forty students eighteen were clerics. 45

A faculty of six professors taught the following subjects in December 1890: moral theology and mathematics (Father Dąbrowski, the rector), theology, philosophy, rhetoric and Polish (Father Barabasz, the vice-rector), dogma, scripture, church history, Latin and French (Father Buhaczkowski), philosophy, Latin and Polish (Dr. C. Laskowski), Latin, Greek, German, world history, arithmetic and geography (Dr. S. Lubowiecki), and English in all the preparatory and seminary classes (Mr. A. McLellan). 46

Perhaps the fullest description of student life at this time was given years later by Msgr. B. Góral of Milwaukee, who entered the preparatory department in 1889. 47 Yearly tuition was $150, but few students were able to make full payment. The food was plain but tasty and healthful; the living quarters, like the rector's own room, were simply furnished. The lessons were conducted in a cordial and friendly spirit that sought to mould both the mind and the heart. Final examinations, at which the rector always presided, were public and oral, the students drawing questions by lot from a bowl on the table. Father Dąbrowski, who was a strict disciplinarian but goodhearted though he rarely smiled, preached to the students every Sunday morning.

The strictness of the seminary discipline provoked criticism in certain quarters which was published in the Polish American press. 48 The discipline

42 [A. Libertus], Historya Seminarium Polskiego w Detroit i Orchard Lake, Mich., [Orchard Lake, Seminarium], 1910, p. 10.
46 Ibid., p. 4, col. 4.
was denounced as being unduly harsh, out of spirit with American liberty, and designed for the training of monks not diocesan priests. For good measure, the critics also censured the general management of the institution — the faculty, the curriculum, the food, the Felician Sisters who had charge of domestic matters, and Father Dąbrowski himself.

The criticism brought rejoinders from the friends of the seminary and from Father Dąbrowski. He accused the Wiarus, a Polish weekly in Winona, Minnesota, of publishing fabricated correspondence of persons in no way connected with the institution, and appealed instead to the authentic testimony of local priests and laymen who could speak about the seminary from firsthand observation and knowledge. 49

Another outspoken defender of the seminary was an anonymous subscriber of the Wiarus from Detroit, who wrote in January 1889. He branded the charges made against the institution a tissue of injustices and untruths concocted by some former seminarian. He stressed the clerical character of the school and its conformity with European seminaries in such details of discipline as reading of secular newspapers and supervision of personal correspondence. As for food, he said that the students and the faculty were served the same dishes in a common refectory and lived on a diet " about which seminarians in Galician seminaries did not even dream. Subsequent events justified and bore out this defense of the seminary. In 1890 the institution produced its first sacerdotal fruits. Two priests were ordained on March 9, 1890, at St. Albertus Church by Bishop John Foley of Detroit, successor of Bishop Borgess. 51 One of the neopresbyters, Father John Gulcz, was destined for the diocese of Harrisburg, while the other, Father Casimir Walajtys, was for the diocese of Detroit.

A newspaper report in December 1890 stated that by then three students of the seminary had been ordained. 52 This third neopresbyter was Father Casimir Słominski who labored in the Archdiocese of Chicago, where his ordination took place. 83 This may explain the omission of his name from Father Dąbrowski's later list of seminary priests as well as the lack of any record of the ordination in the Detroit chancery archives.

Each of these priests was born in Poland; each received his initial education elsewhere; each only completed his theological studies at Detroit;


51  " Detroit Parish Notes ", The Michigan Catholic, NS Vol. 8, No. 11, (March 13, 1890), p. 8, col. 1 ; Record of Ordinations, p. 264, Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan.


53 X. Waclaw Kruszka, op. cit., Vol. 10, p. 73 and 88.
and each was in his twenties at the time of his ordination. Father Walajtys was twenty-three; Father Gulcz twenty-five; and Father Slominski twenty-six. After his ordination, though destined for another diocese, Father Gulcz labored temporarily in the Detroit diocese. 54

These first fruits of the seminary were not produced without considerable effort and expense. All during this initial four-year period, the financing of the institution was one of Father Dąbrowski's leading problems.

In spite of the fact that economic conditions throughout the country improved at this time, the seminary did not share in this improvement as fully as it might have. The struggle which began in 1886 between the Polish Roman Catholic Union and the Polish National Alliance, the two foremost Polish federated societies in the United States, split the Poles into warring factions and affected their attitude toward the seminary. Similarly in Detroit itself, the Kolasiński affair, while temporarily allayed in June 1887 by the opening of St. Albertus Church, broke out afresh in June of the following year with the arrival of Father Kolasiński and the inception of a schismatic parish bitterly hostile toward Father Dąbrowski and the seminary. 55

The sources of income were limited. One of them consisted of tuition fees; it is doubtful, however, whether the seminary collected much of the twenty-some thousand dollars that should have accrued from the 150 some students admitted during this period. No pupil was turned away for inability to pay his tuition. In 1889-1890, for example, one-third of the sixty students paid no tuition, while another one-sixth paid only a part of the $150.00 fee. 58 Father Dąbrowski tried to make up the difference in various ways — loans, collections, appeals for gifts, and business activities. In March 1887, three months after the opening of the seminary, he obtained permission from the diocesan chancery "to borrow money to the amount of twenty-five hundred dollars ($2,500), on the new Polish Seminary." 59 In September of that year, he petitioned the Polish National Alliance to assist the institution with a subsidy. The organization received the appeal favorably at its seventh meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota, voting to assess its members on behalf of the seminary. 58 Within the next two years, the Alliance contributed $368.20 to the institution. 59

54 "Appointments — Book 3., p. 205, in Detroit Archdioecesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan.
57 Dempsey to Dombrowski, letter dated March 26, 1887, in Maes-Dempsey Copy Book, Apr. 12, 1884 - Oct. 5, 1891, p. 276, Detroit Archdioecesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan.
An ever-ready source of help during these difficult initial years was Father Moczygemba himself. After obtaining his release from the Resurrectionists in October 1887, he made his home at the seminary he had aided in launching. Next, he applied for admission into the Detroit Diocese and petitioned Rome for perpetual secularization. Both requests were granted and he became a Detroit diocesan priest in May 1888.

Two months previously Father Moczygemba had entered into a signed agreement with Father Dąbrowski by the terms of which he was to be assured of residence in the seminary or $160 a year. The sum represented the interest on the $4,000 loan made to the institution by Father Moczygemba in September 1884. The interest had been paid regularly up to December 1887. In June 1888, while Father Moczygemba was residing in the seminary, he bought a plot of land adjoining the seminary campus. He paid Mary E. A. Moran $1,150 for this "part of out lot numbered forty-three (43) lying north of Garfield Avenue of the subdivision of the St. Aubin Farm." Two years later, in June 1890, he deeded this property to the seminary in Bishop J. Foley's name, in exchange for the annual "sum of fifty dollars" to be paid until his death by Father Dąbrowski or his successor.

Father Moczygemba died shortly after on February 23, 1891 at the age of sixty-five. Though he had spent only a part of the last three years of his life in the seminary, he "made it the beneficiary of his last will and testament." The exact amount of his bequest is presently unknown. He was buried from the seminary he had helped to found and maintain, though the funeral Mass was celebrated at the Felician Sisters' convent for lack of space in the seminary chapel.

Fund raising through parochial collections, though restricted by the growing partisanship arising from the struggle between the Polish Roman

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62 Polish Seminary to Moczygemba, certificate dated March [10], 1888, in loc. cit., DACA.
63 Moczygemba to [Polish Seminary], note on reverse side of certificate dated March 10, 1888, in loc. cit., DACA.
64 Moran to Moczygemba, warranty deed dated June 12, 1888, in loc. cit., DACA.
65 Dombrowski to Moczygemba, bond dated June 6, 1890, in loc. cit., DACA.
Catholic Union and the Polish National Alliance, provided another small source of income. Conducted, it seems, by friendly pastors in their own parishes during the year or by members of the seminary faculty during the vacation periods, the collections brought a trickle of funds. Father Buhaczkowski set out on such a campaign in December 1888, armed with the recommendation of Bishop Foley who granted him permission «to leave the seminary for several weeks in order to collect money for the support of the seminary.»

How much these collections brought is unknown owing to lack of records but, judging by reports of other fund raising campaigns, they never exceeded three hundred dollars in any one parish.

Another source of income was the seminary printery. Its beginnings went back to Father Dąbrowski's modest parochial establishment in Polonia, Wisconsin. This initial equipment, brought to the Felician Mother-house with the transfer to Detroit, was augmented in 1889 by Father Z. Luczycki when he came to teach in the seminary. This augmented equipment was then set up in the seminary basement and operated with the help of the students and two workers — S. Rzeszotarski and B. Lemke.

Only four booklets and pamphlets printed at this time (1890) are known to have survived. Three of them are reprints of religious works originally published in partitioned Poland: Adoracja za Dusze w Czyścu Cierpiące (p. 180), Nawiedzenia Przenajświętszego Sakramentu Ołtarza i Najświętszej Panny Maryi na każdy Dzień Miesiąca (p. 208), and Sposób Ciągłego Obcowania z Bogiem (p. 160). The one original work was Father Dąbrowski's 168-page booklet on the passion of Christ entitled Narzędzia i Miejsca Męki Pańskiej w Najwierniejszych Obrazkach i Opisach Przedstawione z Uwagami o Męce Pańskiej i Mszy Św. z Dokończeniem Stacyj.

Proceeds from the sale of these works as well as other materials printed at the seminary went for the support of the institution.

Still another source of revenue came from incidental gifts of money and goods donated by individuals and organizations. Monetary aid came from friendly priests, from the Association of Polish Priests, and from the Fredro Dramatic Society in Detroit. Gifts in kind included a plot of land in Wisconsin.

68 Foley to Buhaczkowski [sic], letter dated Dec. 15, 1888, in Maes-Dempsey Copy Book, Apr. 12, 1884 - Oct. 5, 1891, p. 374, DACA.
72 Copies of books in Rare Book Collection, St. Mary's College Library Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
books for the seminary library (for example, a set of Linde's six-volume Słownik Języka Polskiego donated by Rev. M. Orzechowski of Iowa), and food ; in the last connection, the Felician Sisters, particularly Mother M. Monica, the provincial, periodically sent bread, sausage and vegetables to replenish the seminary larder. 74

The total funds used up by the seminary during this five-year period are unknown owing to lack of records. An unfriendly anonymous correspondent, writing in May 1891, claimed carpingly that the institution had "uselessly consumed $ 100,000. "76 It is extremely doubtful whether Father Dąbrowski had so much money to work with since the beginning of the seminary project, much less during this developmental phase.

The limited funds gathered from varied sources and used with discrimination for essentials enabled the Polish Seminary to weather its initial four-year existence. During this time, the Detroit diocesan seminary of St. Francis, started in Monroe three months before the opening of the Polish Seminary in Detroit, was forced to close its doors in 1889, after three difficult years, for lack of personnel and funds. 76

Most of the available finances went for the maintenance of the Polish Seminary, particularly for living necessities and equipment. The salaries paid faculty members, though presently unknown, must have been low. This, in part at least, would explain the frequent changes in faculty personnel.

Nevertheless, as the student body grew, some expansion of facilities became necessary. In the summer of 1887, the third floor of the building was completed. 77 The seminary had opened with only two of the structure's four floors available for occupancy; but the second of these had been temporarily put to use as a parochial school for the children of loyal St. Albertus parishioners. 78 With the lifting of the interdict and the reopening of the parish in June 1887, the children returned to the parochial school and the second floor became available to seminary students.

There is no evidence to indicate that the fourth and last floor of the seminary structure was finished for occupancy by the end of 1890. The contrary seems to be suggested by Father Majer who visited the seminary in June of next year and wrote: "True, there is still quite a bit lacking —

not as regards studies — but as regards things pertaining to the furnishing and completion of this institution. "79

The solicitation of funds for the seminary as well as the perfecting of its organization took place at a time when a certain divisive issue was splitting into opposite camps not only the laity but also the Polish clergy in the United States. Reaction to this issue in the Polish community affected the life of the seminary during this pioneer four-year period, making its struggle for survival all the more difficult.

This disturbing issue was the conflict which developed between the Roman Catholic Union and the Polish National Alliance, the two leading organizations of the time. It was precipitated in 1887 when the Alliance, working with the National League, a secret European organization founded that year for the eventual preparation of another Polish uprising, began soliciting contributions for the Polish cause. 80 The Union opposed this action, partly because its leaders were not in sympathy with the scheme of a new revolt and partly because they distrusted the secrecy surrounding the activities of the National League. The resultant controversy became a contest between the Polish Roman Catholic Union and the Polish National Alliance for supremacy in the Polish American community.

In the ensuing civil war of recrimination, which soon came to include religious and personal as well as political differences, the opponents were judged neither as Catholics nor as Poles but as Union members or Alliance members. 81 If a person did not belong to the Alliance, that organization refused to regard him as a Pole; if he did not support the Union, that organization struck him off the list of Catholics. If a person wished to be both a Catholic and a Polish patriot, he found himself in a quandary: as soon as he joined the Union, the Alliance suspected his patriotism, and when he entered the Alliance, the Union questioned his Catholicism. The partisanship was bitter and mutually exclusive.

From the first, the priests belonging to these two organizations were particularly affected. Individualists, already differing among themselves on various political, social and ecclesiastical issues, they threw themselves into the controversy, formed rival factions, issued condemnatory memorials, appealed to American bishops for support, carrying their battle of words to the public with vigor and virulence.

Two clerical parties immediately formed ranks. The smaller group, referred to as the Allied Priests, constituted the patriotic party supporting

81 X. Waclaw Kruszka, op. cit.. Vol. 4, p. 32.
the Alliance. 82 Its recognized leader was Father Dominic Majer of St. Paul, Minnesota, an avowed admirer of Archbishop John Ireland. It made its views known through the Chicago Zgoda, the Alliance weekly, and until 1888 also through Wiarus, a strongly pro-Alliance paper published in Winona, Minnesota.

The larger group, termed the United Priests, formed the Catholic party affiliated with the Union. 83 Its destinies were directed by Father Vincent Barzyński, C. R. of Chicago, one of the most influential Polish clergymen in the country. Its organs during this time were the weeklies Wiara i Ojczyzna, Kropidło, and Czas — all published in Chicago.

In the disgraceful battle of words, there existed no middle ground for either party. Neutrals were promptly belabored by both sides and accused of lack of both patriotism and Catholicism. This was largely the reason why the Polish Seminary in Detroit was drawn into the conflict and made to suffer as a result. The attacks came not so much because Father Dąbrowski was the avowed enemy of one of the two groups, but because during the dis- sention he refused to identify himself completely and unreservedly with either combatant party.

Father Dąbrowski was officially a member of the Union in whose development he had taken part during the seventies. Some of his closest friends were in the organization. But as a former soldier and participant in the uprising of 1863, he was also sympathetic to patriotic efforts for the liberation of his partitioned homeland. 84 Consequently, although he was not formally a member of the Alliance, he was not out of sympathy with its patriotic aspirations and activities.

The seminary became involved in the conflict between the Allied and the United Priests several months after its own opening. On March 2, 1887, the United Priests held a secret meeting in Chicago after which they issued a challenging Memorial of the Polish Catholic Clergy in the United States; among the seventeen signatures on the document was the name of Father Dąbrowski. 85

Directed to the American hierarchy, the memorial sought to acquaint the bishops with the new conditions that had arisen among the Poles in the United States; it described the Alliance as an irreligious organization, accusing its sacerdotal supporters of unpriestly action and possible collusion with schism. 86 The last charge had reference to the Kolasiński affair in Detroit.

82 Stanisław Osada, op.cit., p. 260-261.
83 Mieczysław Haiman, op. cii., p. 80-83.
where among the active supporters of the suspended priest were some members of the Alliance.

Father Dąbrowski had suffered considerably from the Kolasiński adherents during the formative stage of the seminary. 87 Their ill-will continued to pursue him after the opening of the institution since he remained the official though temporary pastor of St. Albertus. One of his bitterest opponents was a man whom Father Dąbrowski had refused admission to the seminary — Anthony Długi. In January 1887 he had published a scathing leaflet against Father Dąbrowski, which had provoked the rector to initiate (according to newspaper reports) a $20,000 suit for slander, bringing about Długi's arrest. 88 After his release, Długi reciprocated by instituting a $10,000 suit against Father Dąbrowski. 89

Though having a serious local reason for strong grievances, Father Dąbrowski did not wish to blame either the entire Alliance or the Allied Priests for the Kolasiński affair. His name had been attached to the memorial without his knowledge or authorization simply because he was a member of the Polish Roman Catholic Union. Upon his protest, the name disappeared from the memorial in subsequent republication. 90

Refusing to be drawn into the controversy and having close friends in both factions, Father Dąbrowski tried to hold a neutral position and to work for peace between the parties. To this end he opened the seminary to a conference of the Polish clergy similarly interested in putting an end to the strife. The meeting was held in September 1887 but with no immediate results. 91

The following year, Father Dąbrowski renewed his efforts at promoting peace after the Polish National Alliance had dispatched a memorial to Cardinal Ledóchowski at Rome. 92 Signed by 2,470 Alliance members, the memorial complained against what it called the persecutory tactics of the United Priests. Two weeks before the Polish Roman Catholic Union was to hold its fifteenth convention at St. Casimir parish in Detroit on October 2, 1888, Father Dąbrowski summoned several priests for a special conference at St. Albertus. 93 The object of the meeting was "to draw up initial points, if not for a

92 Stanisław Osada, op. eit., p. 278-279.
complete peace among the Polish clergy in America, then at least for some kind of a modus vivendi, in order to put an end to these scandals ... " 94 Attended by Fathers J. Pitas, F. Orzechowski, C. Domagalski, H. Cichocki, J. Dąbrowski, L. Moczygemba and A. Szklorzyk, the conference led to no immediate understanding between the opposing groups. Neither side was willing to compromise with the other.

And so, early in 1889, the storm broke over the seminary. First, Wiarus published two anonymous letters from Detroit, one by an alleged student and the other by his brother, brutally criticizing the administration of institution for gross incompetence.95 Then followed demands from others that the Father Dąbrowski submit a public accounting of the seminary's finances or stop his solicitation of funds from Polish parishes and organizations. 96 In September, as the Alliance convened in Buffalo delegates from La Crosse, Wisconsin, presented a formal petition, demanding that no further subsidies be granted to "institutions bearing Polish titles, established largely by Polish contributions, yet not being Polish national public property. "97 The convention closed its sessions by voting its "moral support" to the seminary which, it had been reported by some, was "the property of a German. "98 This was a covert reference to Bishop Borgess who had resigned his see two years before, in April 1887, but in whose name the property of the seminary had originally been deeded by Father Dąbrowski in 1884.

At the same time, the Kolasiński affair took on new life. Certain adherents of the expelled priest had never become reconciled with the bishop, even after the interdict had been lifted from St. Albertus Church. When, contrary to his promise, Father Kolasiński returned to Detroit without episcopal authorization in June in 1888, over 8,000 persons flocked to his side. 99 Early the next year, he began the establishment of a schismatic parish, Sweetest Heart of Mary, many of whose members were strongly opposed to the seminary. 100 They blamed Father Dąbrowski for their pastor's downfall and loss of St. Albertus parish.

94 Ibid., p. 1, col. 2.
Father Kolasiński's arrival added fuel to this hostility which flamed still more in the summer of 1890, when two assistant priests left the schismatic parish and returned to the obedience of lawful church authorities. Inspired apparently by Father Dąbrowski, both priests (Fathers S. Prawdzicki and J. Rodowicz) spent several weeks in the seclusion of the seminary at the request of Bishop John Foley, the Ordinary of the diocese since November 1888.101

Shortly before this reenstatement, in the spring of 1890, a new attack struck Father Dąbrowski from an unexpected quarter. Father U. Raszkiewicz, writing in Wiara i Ojczyzna, censured the seminary's recently published edition of Rev. J. Stojalowski's Way of the Cross, calling into question the orthodoxy of the institution's doctrinal teaching on indulgences.102 Father Dąbrowski spoke out objectively in defence of the institution, showing that the criticism of the booklet and the seminary was unjustified.103 The Zgoda at once entered the fray to support Father Dąbrowski and to heap criticism upon the Union Priests for their unfriendly attitude toward the seminary.104

The affair continued to smoulder until the summer, when Wiara i Ojczyzna published an article attacking the character both of Father Dąbrowski and the seminary.105 It charged that recent press criticism of the United Priests had been inspired or prepared in the seminary; it rehashed the indulgence incident to the institution's discredit; it suggested that Father Dąbrowski might be to blame for the schism in Detroit; and it threatened the institution with dire consequences if it did not change its ways, and particularly its attitude toward the Union clergy.

The article moved Father Dąbrowski to write a lengthy detailed rejoinder which appeared in several newspapers. He denied that anyone in the seminary had anything to do with censuring the United Priests; he deplored the renewal of the indulgence controversy as injurious to the prestige of the institution; he denied any responsibility for the Kolasiński schism; and he disclaimed any fear of threats based upon unfounded and false premises, expressing the conviction that the "Seminary which God has called to life

will continue developing commendably for the glory of the Church and the benefit of the
Polish people in America. "

Toward the end of the statement, Father Dąbrowski set down his and the seminary's basic
stand regarding the current sacerdotal and organizational strife:

Having spent over twenty years in America, I have not quarreled with anyone, or at least I
have not given anybody cause for quarreling with me; not even one contrary fact can be ad-
duced against me. Since the Seminary does not belong to any party, no one can accuse us of
partisanship; we allow everyone freedom of judgment and viewpoint; the doors and heart of
the Seminary are always open to every upright Polish priest without exception. We are always
grateful to our benefactors and forgive our enemies and pray for them.107

Such were Father Dąbrowski's convictions by the light of which he tried to guide the destinies
of the seminary during the four hard years that, with their gratifying first fruits of three priests
and four publications, brought the institution's developmental period to an end. At least for
the time being, he managed to surmount successfully if not completely most of the problems
connected with the organization, financing, and the controversies that had threatened the in-
stitution's survival. But some of them would return with new difficulties to harass the growth
of the seminary during the next five years.

106  Ks. Józef Dąbrowski, "Korespondentowi Wiary i Ojczyzny", Wiarus, Vol. 5,
107  Loc. cit.
CHAPTER IV. NEW TRIALS

During the five-year period from 1891 to 1895, the Polish Seminary was influenced by the appearance of new difficulties as well as the revival of some old problems. In the midst of the economic distress that affected the country in 1893, these new and old difficulties impeded the progress of the institution but did not keep it from fulfilling its objective. Launched as a venture of faith to meet a specific need, the seminary pursued its chosen task faithfully in spite of mounting difficulties.

Among the new difficulties to afflict the seminary the earliest to strike was criticism of its necessity and utility. Heretofore, attacks had been levelled at the manner in which the institution was being conducted; now they struck at the very raison d'etre of a Polish Seminary in America.

The origin of this controversy cannot presently be determined with certainty. But it seems to have been an offshoot of the school question that divided the American hierarchy into two opposing parties from 1890 to 1893.1 Projected into the open by Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, the issue concerned the use by Catholics of public schools with the addition of religious subjects rather than the erection of parochial schools. As advocated by its proponents, the proposal would spare the Catholics the burden of erecting and maintaining their own schools, bring religion into the public school system, and help to make the Catholics in the United States more American.

The first gun in the new campaign against the Polish Seminary was fired in May 1891, when an anonymous priest living near Milwaukee wrote two letters which were published in the Wiarus. 2 The correspondence was provoked by the initiation of a project calling for the erection of a Polish secondary school in Milwaukee. Calling the proposal both unnecessary and wasteful, the writer cited the seminary in Detroit as an instance of similarly


misguided idealism and effort. For his part, he suggested that a much better course of action would be to make use of extant American Catholic institutions into which Polish could be introduced with considerably less expense and energy.

The ensuing exchange of views evoked considerable correspondence which, according to the editor, showed that "the Polish Seminary in Detroit indeed has... many enemies among the Polish priests, but it also possesses good friends among them."3 Two of them came to its spirited defence at this time.

Father D. Majer of St. Paul, Minnesota, who up to 1890 had been the acknowledged leader of the Allied Priests but who subsequently had formed a new third faction of Polish Union Priests, testified that he had recently visited the seminary and found it "conducted in an orderly and exemplary fashion" and that "people do well if they send their children there."4 Father C. Domagalski, also a former member of the Allied Priests and a long-time friend of Father Dąbrowski, stated that the seminary had not only given "uncommon proofs of its usefulness to the emigration and the Catholic Church" but also "was already beginning to produce fruits"; he praised the faculty and the curriculum with its European system, which was a guarantee that the seminary stood higher in studies and moral training "than all similar American institutes."5

These words echoed an earlier anonymous complaint made in 1890, charging American bishops with ordaining ill-qualified Americanized graduates of diocesan seminaries to promote the Americanization of Polish parishes; the writer had also deplored the lack of episcopal support for the Polish Seminary "built by widows' pennies" to train Polish priests grounded in the knowledge and love both of Catholicism and Polonism — its language, tradition, and spirit.6

Whether Father Dąbrowski took part in the controversy at this time the available evidence does not indicate. But he had made known his views on the necessity of a distinctively Polish Seminary, as a supplement to extant diocesan seminaries in America, long before the current dispute. In 1884, prior to the erection of the seminary, he had written to the American hierarchy in his introductory circular about the need of Polish priests in the United States:

This need can be supplied only by erecting a Seminary to pay special attention to the gathering of Polish youth and educating them for the priesthood.

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The Polish youth, being educated in the different American institutions, cannot be well instructed in their native language, and on this account many are entirely unable to preach decently and to explain properly the truths of faith with benefit to the souls of their flocks. 7

This view, however, did not seem to be generally held in Polish circles during the Eighties and Nineties. Evidence of this could be seen in the continually increasing attendance of Polish students at diocesan seminaries throughout the country. Milwaukee’s St. Francis Seminary, which added Polish to its curriculum in 1883, attracted most of these students, graduating twelve Polish priests between 1883 and 1890 and seventeen more between 1891 and 1895. 8 During the same periods, the Polish Seminary in Detroit graduated three and eight priests respectively.

Simultaneously with the emergence of this problem, a former divisive issue reappeared with renewed intensity to hinder the growth of the seminary during this five-year period. This was the revival and expansion of factionalism that had originally led to hostilities between the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Roman Catholic Union, with resultant harm to the seminary. Initiated in 1887, this inter-organizational struggle had quieted somewhat toward the end of the decade only to break out afresh in the Nineties. The opening wedge in conflict, however, was thrust at the Buffalo convention of the Alliance in 1889, when Father D. Majer and his clerical friends broke with the organization over membership policies and formed a new association in 1890 called the Polish Union. 9

This secession contributed to still greater factionalism. Soon separatist Polish unions and associations of local societies sprang up in Bay City, Scranton, Cleveland, Milwaukee and Detroit. 10 As a result of this separatism, both major organizations were weakened and further embittered against each other, the one blaming the other for its plight.

The priests were particularly affected by these organizational schisms, because they played important roles in them. The number of priestly factions increased from two to at least four the United Priests led by Father V. Barzyriski C. R. and affiliated with the Polish Roman Catholic Union,
the Union Priests associated with Father Majer and the Polish Union, the Allied Priests supporting the Polish National Alliance, and the neutral priests who refused to accept the full dictates of any organization or individual.

Father Dąbrowski belonged to the last group, but he was willing to cooperate with any of the other three factions as long as this would promote the interests of the seminary and general unity among the Poles in America. Since the Polish National Alliance had already given financial aid to the seminary, he approached it for a renewal of the subsidy when the Alliance convened at Detroit in September 1891.11 The convention complied with the request, assessing each of its 3,865 members fifty cents a year for the next two years in behalf of the seminary.

The acceptance of the subsidy raised a storm of criticism against Father Dąbrowski and the institution. It began with the circulation of allegations about a secret deal between the Alliance and the seminary, which was denied by the latter.12 Next, rumbles made themselves heard at the meeting of the Polish clergy assembled at South Bend, Indiana, in October 1891. Attended largely by representatives of the United Priests as well as by Father Barabasz, the vice-rector of the Seminary, the convention brought into existence the Permanent Conference of the Polish Clergy, electing Father J. Gulski of Milwaukee its president. Although it discussed the religious needs of the Polish immigrants, the new sacerdotal organization voted no aid to the seminary; instead, some of its members tried to prevail upon Father Barabasz to disavow the seminary's acceptance of financial aid from the Alliance.13

Soon a steady stream of recrimination began to flow through the pages of certain weeklies, fed chiefly by the Winona Wiarus and seconded by the Chicago Wiara i Ojczyzna. The latter published three uncomplimentary articles about the seminary in 1892 in Numbers 17, 18, and 40, according to one report.14 The former, originally a friend of the Polish National Alliance but after 1889 its bitter foe, led the journalistic campaign against the seminary for its friendly attitude toward the Alliance, especially after the seminary's alleged intervention in getting Bishop J. Foley to participate.

in the Detroit convention of the Alliance in September 1891; this according to the editor, drove "us to the ninth degree of wrath". As a result, through 1892 and 1893 the Wiarus (renamed Katolik in June 1893) ran numerous anonymous reports, comments, and articles tending to undermine the prestige of the institution among the readers of the paper.

The gist of these attacks boiled down to this thesis: Father Dąbrowski, a Catholic priest who wanted to raise the level of the Polish clergy in America, founded a seminary in Detroit. To win support for this institution, which he says belongs to the Polish people but which really is his property he chose to consort with the Polish National Alliance — an organization run by fallen-away Catholics, non-Catholics, and notorious atheists and anarchists. He stubbornly persists in accepting Judasmoney from the Alliance, even though most of the Polish priests have denounced the organization. As a result, the Wiarus, along with the majority of the Polish clergy and people in America, feels it a sacred duty to denounce the institution in the hope of affecting a necessary and belated reform in its management.

The first shot in this renewed sniping attack of recrimination against the seminary was fired in March 1892 by an anonymous priest, who called the rector a "pharisaical reformer" and the four priestly graduates of the institution "utter failures."

When Father Dąbrowski partly identified the writer as a resident of Grand Rapids, the paper denied this, saying the priest lived "a little closer" to Detroit. It is not clear from subsequent correspondence whether, besides this anonymous priest and the editor himself, anyone else joined in the sniping against the institution, its rector, the faculty, alumni, and publications — all of whom served as targets of the abusive attacks.

In the course of this two-year campaign of recrimination, the Wiarus also published notes warning the seminary that full reports were being sent to Cardinal Ledóchowski at Rome as the Prefect of the Propaganda a since January of 1892 and publicized in partitioned Poland. It also periodically printed rumors that the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith would take over the seminary or that the Polish Jesuits would establish a rival insti-

tution. It even took advantage of Father Dąbrowski's trip to Europe in the summer of 1892 to misrepresent it as a move to denounce Father Barzyński C. R. at Rome for alleged opposition to the seminary.

Father Dąbrowski retorted twice during the sniping campaign. In March 1892, he responded to the initial recriminatory assault with a calm and brief statement entitled "In the Name of Truth"; it was accompanied by a testimonial letter from Bishop Foley who wrote "with great satisfaction" of the work done for the Polish Catholics by the seminary and by Father Dąbrowski. In October of that year, the rector issued another short rejoinder titled "From the Seminary", flatly denying the allegations made against the institution.

There may have been one other reply published in the seminary's own weekly Niedziela, either in the April 24 or the May 1 issue, both of which lack certain pages that have been torn out, making it impossible to check the allegation made by the Wiarus, as only an incomplete volume of the institution's publication for 1892 has survived. In any case, subsequent misrepresentations evoked similarly brief rejoinders from the Niedziela.

For the most part, however, the seminary chose to pass over the attacks in silence, refusing to be drawn into fruitless controversy. It relied not only upon the public's sense of justice and fairness but also upon the defence of its friends, believing that in the end truth would prevail. This policy found expression on several occasions not only in the Niedziela but also in a letter written by Father Dąbrowski in 1894 to a newspaper publisher which stated: "All manner of boasting, empty publicity, in fact, all vain display is unspeakably hateful to me. I abhor it, because it spells perdition."

In this time of need the seminary did find friends who rose to its defence in the press. The most outspoken journalistic defender of the institution was the organ of the Polish National Alliance, Zgoda, which ran several ar-

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tides in support of the seminary. An unknown defender also appeared in Milwaukee. In addition to facing divisive issues, Father Dąbrowski had to contend constantly during this five-year period with the problem of financing the seminary. The solution of this ever-present problem, complicated by Father Dąbrowski's stand in the conflict between the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Roman Catholic Union, was made still more difficult at this time by the financial panic of 1893. Its effects soon made themselves felt throughout the country, particularly among the Polish residents who depended upon steady employment for means of livelihood.

The Polish Seminary in Detroit drew its income from several sources during this period — tuition fees, special grants, individual gifts, and proceeds from the seminary printery and book-store. Lack of records makes it impossible to determine the exact total amount of this income; but some estimate can be gathered from the fragmentary evidence at hand.

Student tuition should have brought between $ 58,000 and $ 60,000 from the nearly 400 students who were expected to pay $ 150 a year for board and tuition. This income was never realized in full, because, as Father Dąbrowski pointed out on several occasions, "many (students) receive their education without cost while others obtain it at considerable discount." The largest donation came from the Polish National Alliance. The result of a fifty-cent assessment levied in September 1891 upon each member of the organization's 3,865 members over a two-year period, it brought a total of $ 3,558.33. This was paid in three separate installments of $ 771.50 in March 1892, $ 1,083.50 in February 1893, and $ 1,703.33 in October 1893. The organization, however, discontinued its aid after this, voting only its "moral support" to the seminary at the tenth convention held at Chicago in September 1893.

The institution also met with disappointment at this time from the Polish Roman Catholic Union. Its twentieth convention meeting at Chicago in August 1893 considered the question of giving aid to the seminary upon the motion of Father L. Miśkiewicz of Pittsburgh seconded by August Płocki

of Bay City. The assembly, however, voted down the motion on the grounds that the seminary was "a private institution and Father Dąbrowski had never as yet personally petitioned the Catholic Union for help." 33 Another reason for this rebuff, noted by the historian of the Union, was the coolness between Father Dąbrowski and Father Barzyński, who "was hurt by the fact that Father Dąbrowski drew financial aid from the Polish National Alliance..." 34 These refusals were somewhat assuaged by the favorable actions of two other organizations meeting that year. In October, the Polish Union convention in Buffalo voted its support to the seminary by urging its members to subscribe to the Niedziela and annual donations for the institution. 35 What this amounted to in dollars and cents during this period no available record indicates.

Much more tangible aid came from the meeting of the Polish clergy held at Buffalo in December. The twenty-six priests in attendance pledged themselves to subscribe over $1,000 for the seminary. 36 Other organizations which contributed to the seminary according to surviving records, were: the Fredro Dramatic Society in Detroit — $15.00 in 1892; and the Polish Dramatic in Winona — $47.25 in 1892. 37

In August of that year, the seminary also received an unspecified amount of income from a ten-day fair and raffle sponsored by the institution with the bishop's permission for the benefit of the school. 38

Parish collections also provided a source of income, as Fathers Barabasz, Buhaczkowski and Kisielewicz solicited funds for the seminary during the vacation seasons. The largest contributions came from SS. Cyril and Methodius parish in Lemont, Illinois — $200 in 1894. 39 The largest personal donation came from the testamentary bequest of Father F. Klonowski deceased Shamokin, Pennsylavnia, pastor, who in 1894 left $300 to the seminary. The Niedziela called him a benefactor of the institution who "often carried aid either in financial gifts or by counsel." 40 The seminary received, in addition, a number of gifts in kind. In 1891, T. Żółtowski of Detroit donated a painting to the seminary chapel. 41

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34 Mieczysław Haiman, op. cit., p. 133.
1894, on the occasion of Father Dąbrowski's silver sacerdotal jubilee, the Lemke Family offered a silver service to the jubilarian. 42

One of the better, because steady, sources of income was the institutional printshop. Expanded in 1891 with the help S. Rzeszotarski, a skilled printer, and B. Lemke, business manager, the shop printed not only tickets, handbills, leaplets, almanacs, and the like but also more ambitious things. 43 On September 6, 1891, it launched the publication of the seminary's first paper the weekly Niedziela an illustrated popular journal of sixteen pages nine and one half by thirteen and one half inches, costing $ 2.00 a year.44

A contemporary critic of Polish American journalism called the weekly " very good " and spoke highly of its first two editors — Rev. M. Barabasz (1891-August 1892) and Rev. P. Cwiąkala (1892-September 1894). 45 The Niedziela was the sixth Polish weekly founded in Detroit since 1874 ; its predecessors were all short-lived, only the Prawda founded in 1888 and the Gwiazda established in 1889 surviving until 1891 to compete with the Niedziela for Detroit readers. 48

The number of the paper's subscriber's at this time is unknown, but it must have been sufficient to bring revenue to the institution, because the third editor, Father J. Mueller, specified that one of the weekly's purposes was to bring " material aid to the Seminary ",47 The Niedziela carried about two pages of advertising which helped to increase its income.

Besides the weekly, the seminary printshop also printed Polish booklets and brochures for distribution among the Poles in America. These were mostly reprints of works originally published in partitioned Poland; some were offprints of serialized stories that had appeared in the Niedziela ; only a few were original. This led to the establishment of a bookshop department which also imported books from Poland for sale in the United States. 48

The income derived from such varied sources served largely for maintenance expenditures, but it covered a certain amount of expansion as well. The fourth floor was finally completed for occupancy, probably in 1891, for in August of the next year when E. Dunikowski, professor of the University of

45 Henryk Nagiel, Dziennikarstwo Polskie w Ameryce i Jego 30-letnie dzieje, Chi-cago, Komitet, 1894, p. 116.
46 Stanisław Zieliński, Bibliografia Czasopism Polskich Zagranicą 1830-1934, Warsza-wa, Światowy Związek, 1935, p. 171-172.
Lwów, visited the seminary he noted "a powerful four story structure." With time, too, more beds were added to the dormitories and more desks were put into the study halls and class rooms to accommodate the growing student body.

Professor Dunikowski also remarked on the institution's lack of funds which, in his opinion, stood in the way of the seminary's development. This perennial problem was the subject of discussion between Cardinal Ledóchowski, who became Prefect of the Propaganda in January 1892, and Father Dąbrowski when the rector journeyed to Rome in the summer of that year in the interest of the seminary.

One result of the discussion was the Cardinal's accession to Father Dąbrowski request that two students of the seminary be granted scholarships at the Urban College of the Propaganda, so that they might prepare themselves in Rome for future professorial work in Detroit.

Another, still more important, consequence was the initiation of action aiming at the incorporation of the seminary. In accordance with American ecclesiastical decrees regulating church property, enacted to put an end to the abuses of lay trusteeship, the seminary had been deeded from the beginning by Father Dąbrowski to the bishop of Detroit and his successors. As a result, each successive bishop held full legal ownership of the seminary under the title of fee simple before the civil law, although in the eyes of the Church he was not the owner but only the administrator of the institution, as well as of all the other temporal goods and properties in the diocese (except those held by religious orders).

With the revival of trusteeism among the Polish Catholics, complaints were raised against this arrangement. It was said that the seminary, though erected and maintained by public funds, was nevertheless not Polish but private episcopal property; as such, it gave no accounting of its finances to its Polish supporters, nor allowed them any voice in its management. Instead, its Polish character as well as its very existence were at the mercy of the bishop. It was further charged that, under this arrangement, the Polish clergy in America upon whose support the growth of the seminary largely depended had no voice in the administration of the institution, since its finances and organization were under diocesan control.

Apparently to allay some of these charges and to assure the institution wider support among the clergy, Father Dąbrowski undertook the incorpo-

49 Dr. Emil Habdank Dunikowski, Wśród Polonii w Ameryce, Druga Serya Listów z Ameryki, Lwów, Starzyk, 1893, p. 54.
ration of the seminary in accordance with instructions received from Cardinal Ledóchowski. What these instructions were we do not know at present in precise detail. Some notion of them, however, may be gleaned from a typed undated and unsigned document in the Detroit Chancery Archives. 54 Headed "By-laws of the corporation of St. Mary's, St. Cyrill's and Methodius' Seminary", it called for a "protector" in the person of the Apostolic Delegate, a "president" in the person of the Bishop of Detroit, a Board of Administration composed of the Rector and four Polish priests elected from among the clergy in America, a Committee of Inspection comprised of American bishops of five dioceses, and a Rector and Vice-Rector. The document says nothing about the ownership of the institution, but presumably the incorporation of the property was to take place in the name of the Detroit bishop, in accordance with the decrees of the Third Council of Baltimore (1884) and the current canonical legislation of the Church. Under this arrangement, the property would be committed to the bishop in trust to be held by him in the name of the diocese and administered according to the wish of the church. 55

It seems, however, that Father Dąbrowski contemplated incorporating the Polish Seminary in a manner similar to that successfully carried through at this time by Rev. Joseph Jessing, founder of St. Joseph College at Columbus, Ohio, for the training of German-speaking priests in America. Established in September 1888, St. Joseph College was incorporated in December 1892 as a Pontifical College under the immediate authority of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. 58 This arrangement not only placed the institution outside the direct jurisdiction of the diocese and the proprietary control of the bishop but also guaranteed the canonical existence of the college and its specific character. Upon approval of the incorporation Father Jessing, who had held the juridical title to the school in his own name in fee simple, transferred the ownership to the Sacred Congregation. 57 'If the choice had been left to him, it seems that Father Dąbrowski would have chosen a similar system of incorporation for his institution — namely,
that of pontifical status under the Sacred Congregation; but, according to Cardinal Ledóchowski, this was no longer possible since the seminary already enjoyed quasi-canonical status, presumably because the legal ownership of the seminary had been vested in the bishop of the diocese of Detroit.58 In any event, following Cardinal Ledochowski’s instructions in the matter, Father Dąbrowski began to work for the incorporation of the seminary within the existing diocesan framework, with the Bishop of Detroit to serve both as the legal owner and as the president of the seminary in its new corporate form.

Though the incorporation seems to have been planned to take place in 1892, this did not happen for reasons presently unknown. In September 1893, the matter was brought up for discussion at the first convention of the Polish Union in St. Paul, Minnesota, but again without results. 59 Finally in December 1893, the issue received the attention of the Polish clergy assembled in Buffalo to discuss various religious problems. 60 Twenty-six priests from various parts of the country, except Chicago and Milwaukee, were in attendance while several others sent messages of concurrence.

The meeting approved the scheme of incorporation, electing four priests to serve with Father Dąbrowski on the seminary Board of Administration: B. Gramlewicz of Nanticoke, Pa., T. Flaczek of Buffalo, N. Y., A. Ignasiak of Erie, Pa., and U. Stanowski of St. Louis, Mo. In support of its action, the assembly also subscribed $1,000 to the seminary.

According to extant press reports, the seminary was to be incorporated "in the name of the Detroit bishop and the local priests", as soon as proper understanding and approval were effected with the Apostolic Delegate and the American bishops. 61 For this purpose a meeting was held at the seminary on January 24, 1894, with the newly elected members of the Board of Administration in attendance. 62

While the details of this conference are unknown, it seems probable that out of its deliberations came the undated and unsigned "By-laws of the corporation of St. Mary’s, St. Cyril’s and Methodius’ Seminary" now found in the chancery archives. In any case, again for some unknown reasons, the incorporation did not get much beyond this stage and collapsed during 1894, for nothing more was reported about it during this period.

Perhaps the scheme gave way to a new project, because Rev. Dr. J. Ciemniewski who served on the seminary faculty from 1893 to 1895 wrote in 1896 that "for a year efforts are being made at Rome to bring friars and

58 Dąbrowski to Barabasz, letter dated 29 czerwca 1892, facsimile in Ks. Aleksander Syski, op. tit., p. 234.
entrust them with the management and administration of the Polish Seminary in Detroit. Presently available sources are silent about any such move being made as a substitute for the unsuccessful incorporation.

Yet in spite of this failure and all the other obstacles — the depression, the unfavorable publicity in the press, the opposition from certain quarters, and the lack of whole-hearted support — the Polish Seminary continued to grow slowly, justifying the faith of its rector. This very growth brought with it organizational problems that required prompt and prudent solution.

One of these concerned the staff of the seminary. The scant financial resources of the school, its exposure to unfavorable criticism in the press, an excessive teaching load carried by too few teachers, prospects of parochial advancement — all affected the personnel and led to frequent changes. The total number of professors who for a longer or shorter time served on the seminary faculty during this period amounted to twenty-two. In spite of this, the faculty continued to grow, till by 1895 it numbered ten men. 64

During the first scholastic year of this period, 1891-1892, it seems that five new members were added to the faculty—one priest and four laymen. 65 The priest was Rev. John Rzadkowolski, who after his ordination in Poland in 1884 came to America in 1890. 66 Of the four lay teachers, three were simultaneously students themselves in the theology department and taught on a part-time basis, while only one was a full-time instructor. He was P. M. Traynor, about whom nothing further is known; the three part-time student-teachers were: Peter Basiński, John Moneta, and John Belzowski. 67 It is also possible that B. Strand likewise taught briefly during this school year. 68

The seminary acquired three new professors in 1892. Two of them were priests who came as a result of Father Dąbrowski's second trip to Europe and the cooperation of Bishop L. Solecki of Przemyśl. 69

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63  Ks. J. C., Położenie i Potrzeby Kościoła Katolickiego w Stanach Zjednoczonych Północnej Ameryki a w Szczególności Zamieszkałych Tam Polaków, Kraków, Gebethner, 1896, p. 193.
66  Wincenty Smołczyński, Przewodnik Adresowy i Historya Osady Polskiej w Detroit, [Detroit, Smołczyński, 1907)], p. 136.
67  Ks. Dr. M. Barabasz, op. cit., p. 4, col. 4.
One was twenty-seven-year old Rev. Paul Ćwiąkala from Austrian Poland. 70 A graduate of the Przemysł seminary, where he was ordained in August 1892, he came to Detroit to take the place vacated by Father Barabasz. After serving as second editor of Niedziela for two years, he resigned the post but stayed on at the seminary until 1895, when he departed for a parochial assignment in Cleveland, Ohio.

The second professor was Rev. Ladislaus Kisielewicz, also from Austrian Poland where he received his schooling and ordination. He taught scripture liturgy, church history and Latin during his four years at the institution. 71

The third newcomer was Mr. Romuald Piątkowski from Russian Poland. He stayed on for the next eighteen years, teaching most of the high school subjects as the need arose, but devoting most of his time to Polish, history, and penmanship. 72 He was married in the seminary chapel to a Frenchwoman, Miss L. Grene, in 1893. 73 As a translator of Kant, popular lecturer in adult education in Detroit, and an active worker in the Polish National Alliance, he came to be regarded by alumni as one of the faculty luminaries.

The year 1893 brought one new professor to the seminary. He was Rev. Dr. John Ciemniewski, who took Dr. Laskowski's post as professor of philosophy. 74 Holding doctorates in philosophy and theology from Rome, he stayed at Detroit for only two years. 75 After serving as pastor at Trenton, New Jersey, for several months, he returned to his native Poland where in 1896 he published an interesting analysis of Catholic ecclesiastical affairs in America.

In 1894, the seminary acquired its first specially-trained alumnus-professor in the person of Rev. John Mueller. 76 A member of the school's original group of students, he had been sent to Rome in 1890 not only to complete his theological studies but also to prepare himself for the seminary faculty. Following his ordination in 1894, he returned to Detroit where he assumed the teaching of moral and dogma in the seminary. The same year, in September, he also took over from Father Ćwiąkala the editing of Niedziela.

Four new teachers, all laymen, came to the institution in 1895. One was Peter Panek, a former student of theology at the seminary, who taught
Latin and Greek for three years before returning to Poland; another was John Godrycz, who came to the seminary with a doctorate in philosophy and deacon's orders. He taught philosophy and history prior to his ordination in 1896, continuing in the same capacity after that date.

The two other teachers were not Polish. One was John O'Dwyer (or Dwyer), an Irish teacher of mathematics, geography, and English; the other was John Wales (or Nalles), holding a master's degree from Toronto University, who taught higher mathematics, English literature, physics, and chemistry.

Others who taught at the institution during this period were: Father Dąbrowski, the rector and spiritual director; Father Barabasz, the vice-rector and professor of theology as well as editor of Niedziela; and Father Buhaczkowski, teacher of languages and second vice-rector after Father Barabasz's departure. A writer of verse and translator from the French, Father Barabasz left the seminary in 1892 to assume a pastoral post in Baltimore, Maryland.

Three laymen who had become members of the faculty in 1890 also saw service briefly. Dr. Simon Lubowiecki left in 1891 to become an organist. Dr. Charles Laskowski was released two years later to permit him to devote his entire attention to the editing of a weekly, Prawda, in Detroit. Mr. A. McLellan left some time after 1892, presumably to devote himself unreservedly to his duties as inspector of secondary schools in Wayne County.

The faculty associated with the seminary during this period gave evidence of activity beyond the demands of the classroom. Father Barabasz was an active member of the Association of Representatives of the Polish American Press founded at Detroit in 1891. Dr. Laskowski attended the convention of Polish botanists and physicians in Krakow that same year. Dr. Laskowski and Father Ćwiąkała served as American correspondents for the Przegląd Emigracyjny founded in 1892 at Lwów.

The faculty's extracurricular influence made itself felt most directly...

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78 S. A. Iciek, Their Grandson, [mimeographed autobiography in St. Mary's College Library Archives], [Norwich, Iciek, 1944], p. 61; [D. & J. Sadlier], loc. cit.
80 "Z Niw Polskich w Ameryce", Wiur, Vol. 6, No. 18, (1 maja 1891), p. 8, ool. 2.
in Detroit's Polish community through lectures, speeches, and press contributions. In December 1895, with the assistance of Father F. Mueller, the pastor of St. Albertus, three faculty members initiated a series of popular lectures that continued seasonally for several years. The first lecturers were Professors R. Piątkowski, J. Godrycz and P. Panek; their discourses dealt with Poland, nature, and man. The management of the lectures was in the hands of a specially founded Friends of Education Society. Auditors paid a nominal fee of five cents a lecture, the proceeds being set aside to assist poor students at the seminary.

Like the faculty, the student body also continued to grow during this period in spite of the difficulties afflicting the school. One probable reason for this was the fact that Father Dąbrowski rarely if ever refused admittance to needy and impoverished students. As long as they showed inclination and ability to study for the priesthood, he accepted them regardless of their financial status. Local students attending the preparatory grades boarded at home.

In any case, the enrollment at this time doubled from sixty-six students in June 1891 to 125 pupils in June 1895. The annual increase rose as follows: after 1890 only one, after 1891 eleven students, after 1892 seven, after 1893 twenty-five, and after 1894 twenty students. The largest increase came during the depression year of 1893, when the fall enrollment exceeded 100 for the first time. Most of the students were enrolled in the preparatory classical department; only a few attended the philosophical and theological courses, owing largely to transfers made after the preparatory courses to diocesan seminaries. In January 1894, when the student body numbered 108, there were six students in theology, twenty-one in philosophy, and eighty-one in the five-year high school classes.

This increased student body produced eight priests, according to Father Dąbrowski's own list prepared in 1901. The neopresbyters included Reverends Francis Mueller ordained for Detroit in October 1891, Bronislaus Jankowski for Canada in August 1892, Peter Basiński for Buffalo in March 1893, John Moneta for Wichita in March 1893, Francis Węgrzynowski for Omaha in April 1894, Anthony Duszyński for Baltimore in June 1894, Joseph Dulski for Baltimore in June 1894, and Lucian Bójnowski for Hartford in January 1895.

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88 S. A. Iciek, op. tit., p. 59.
91 Dąbrowski to Kruszka, letter dated Czerwiec 1901 [sic], quoted by X. Waclaw Kruszka, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 149-150; Record of Ordinations Book 2, p. 266-269, in Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan.
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Others who made part of their studies at Detroit but were ordained elsewhere were: Reverend Felician Szulborski ordained for Baltimore in 1892; Ignatius Klejna for Buffalo in 1894; and Ladislaus Bobkiewicz who came to the seminary in 1891, after his ordination, to improve his command of Polish. 92 He was the seminary's first "graduate student" so to speak, just as Father Szulborski who died in 1894 was the institution's first priest to die.

The curricular and departmental organization of the institution reached its full development at this time. By June 1892, the preparatory classical department consisted of five grades, conducted according to European standards. 93 Religion, Latin, Polish, English and mathematics were taught in every grade; geography and penmanship in the first two; Greek, history, physics and chemistry in the last three; elements of zoology and botany were given in the first and second grades respectively. 94 In the fall of 1895, the study of Lithuanian was added to French in the modern language curriculum. 95

The seminary department also consisted of five grades: two of philosophy and three of theology. The standard courses were given in each according to ecclesiastical requirements. The language of instruction in theology was Latin, while Polish predominated in the remaining subjects, except geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry and English where the English language was used. 96

The institution promoted special interest in languages. At the June graduation in 1894, students spoke during the exercises in nine languages: Latin, Greek, Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Russian, French, German and English. 97 Bishop Foley, by way of response, addressed the students and faculty in Latin.

Student life during this period was enlivened by a varied program of extra-curricular activities: athletic, cultural, and religious. 98 There was an annual retreat usually given at mid-year, the institutional Forty-Hour Devotion in October, the feasts of St. Stanislaus Kostka in November and of St. Joseph in March, the Polish January and November Uprisings, and intramural baseball.

The older students also took part in special activities. One of them, A. Marcinkiewicz of Buffalo, won the third prize in the literary contest sponsored

92 [A. Libertus], op. cit., p. 32-34.
sored by the Polish National Alliance in 1894. 99 The students likewise sent essays and photographs of the seminary to the Polish Exposition at Lwów in 1894.100 Student life was further enriched by periodic visits of distinguished guests outstanding among whom were : Professor E. Dunikowski of the University of Lwów, a famed traveller, Rev. S. Radziejowski, editor and member of the Prussian parliament, and Msgr. A. Sbaretti, representative of the Apostolic Delegate to the United States.101

Perhaps the most joyful incident was the commemoration of Father Dąbrowski’s twenty-five years in the priesthood in August 1894.102 Students from Detroit, the Felician Sisters, and clergy from various parts of the country joined in congratulating the rector. Pope Leo XIII sent the jubilarian his personal blessing on this occasion.

A year later, the entire institution received the papal benediction, when Bishop J. Foley of Detroit made his episcopal visit to Rome. Upon his return, Bishop Foley informed Father Dąbrowski that both Leo XIII and Cardinal Ledóchowski sent their special blessing to the faculty and students of the Polish Seminary in Detroit.103

This was a heartwarming and reassuring message from the seminary's three leading ecclesiastical superiors. It not only assuaged the heartaches of the past but also brought new courage for the future. The seminary had survived numerous criticisms and difficulties, produced at least eight priests and published as many publications, largely owing to the generosity of its friends and the unshaken faith of its rector. It would require increased amounts of both during the next five years of its existence.

CHAPTER V. CALMER TIMES

The Polish Seminary in Detroit was now nine years old. It had survived difficult times. Now it was to enjoy a brief respite of comparative peace. This period from 1896 to 1900, though not wholly free from hardship and controversies, merits the designation "Calmer Times".

During these years, which were free from depression and marked by steady Polish immigration from Europe, the organization of the seminary underwent several changes. Perhaps the most significant was the expansion of the high school department to include students who had no intention of studying for the priesthood. This was largely the result of the fact that over the past years a certain percentage of the students had discontinued their studies upon gaining a clearer notion of their vocation. Some of them had turned to other callings in the professions and in business. In 1897, a former student, S. Lachajewski, completed his medical studies at the Detroit Medical College.1 Two years later, another student, F. Wasielkowski reached the same goal at the University of Michigan, while A. Cyrowski became a lawyer. 2 Two other graduates, J. Lorkowski and T. Heliński were teaching English in Detroit's night schools for immigrants. 3

Influenced by these considerations, Father Dąbrowski in August 1899 issued a notice, calling attention for the first time to the wider scope of the institution's high school department. The notice stated that the purpose of the Polish Seminary is the education of Polish youth in a religious, moral and national spirit, and at the same time, by means of classical training, modern languages, the natural sciences and the like in the high school curriculum to prepare the youth for future professions: namely, sacred theology taught at the institution after the completion of a two-year philosophical course, or lay professions: law, medicine, technical studies, and the like. 4

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This broadening of policy had no immediate effect on the school's curriculum, because it affected the high school department which supplied the same basic classical program to all students, both clerical and lay. The studies were conducted in both the Polish and English languages.

Launched with the announcement of a free scholarship to be given a deserving boy from a Detroit parish, the new policy likewise exercised no instant influence on the school's enrollment. The effects, however, made themselves felt after the policy had been in effect for more than a year.

During this five-year period, in spite of improved economic conditions and increasing Polish immigration, the school's enrollment on the whole grew more slowly than it had done previously. Statistically, the growth between 1896 and 1900 amounted to only thirty-one students, with the annual enrollment being distributed as follows: 123, 133, 131, 153 and 154.

Most of the growth occurred in the high school, which annually contained about three-fourths of the institution's student body. In 1896, only thirty of the 123 students were registered for philosophy and theology. Five years later, only twenty-eight of the 154 students were classified as members of the philosophy and theology group.

The growth of the high school department enabled the institution to state publicly in 1898 that, in spite of various difficulties, the school, "could not complain at the lack of students". In fact, it was beginning to reach its maximum capacity, for at the end of school year in 1900 it was reported that "presently the school chapel can hardly accommodate the students." As a result of the growing enrollment during this five-year period the seminary graduated nineteen priests and gave partial preparatory training to about twenty others who completed their studies at various diocesan seminaries. Of the former group, seven were ordained in 1897 and eight in 1900 — the highest annual totals up to that time.

The priests who completed their training at the Polish Seminary during this five-year period and the dioceses to which they were assigned included:

8  [M. H. Wiltzius], The Catholic Directory, Almanac and Clergy List — Quarterly for the Year of Our Lord 1900, Milwaukee, Wiltzius, 1900, p. 271.
A. Marcinkiewicz (Buffalo—1897), J. Godrycz (Detroit—1897), J. Grudziński (Leavenworth—1897), S. Jaszczynski (Leavenworth—1897), P. Kieruj (Detroit—1897), B. Radka (Omaha 1897), J. Folta (Detroit—1898), S. Niedbalski (San Antonio—1898), F. Nona (Dallas—1898), J. Culkowski (Hartford—1899), C. Ćwikliński (Lincoln—1900), J. Czepanowski (Pittsburgh—1900), J. Czubek (Boston—1900), A. Grudziński (Detroit—1900), A. Janiszewski (Belleville—1900), A. Kaupas (Scranton—1900), and J. Walczak (Detroit—1900).12

Others ordained during this period who made only a part of their studies at one time or another in the Polish Seminary were: J. Cerański, L. Chodacki, J. Chylewski, W. Hordych, F. Jagielski, L. Jarecki, F. Kasprzak, J. Korczyk, M. Kotecki, S. Kubiszewski, J. Gara, P. Góra, B. Góral, S. Niedbalski, J. Pietrasik, M. Polaski, F. Rusin, J. Sajecki, B. Walter, and I. Wypich. Two of the above priests — L. Chodacki and F. Rusin — though listed by Prof. A. Piwowarski (writing as A. Libertus), may not have been students at the seminary, according to Rev. F. Bolek.13

Another immediate consequence of the growing student body was the formation of the seminary's first alumni association. At the instigation of Rev. Francis Mueller of Detroit in August 1899, letters were dispatched to nearly seventy Polish and Lithuanian priests who had received all or part of their training at the Polish Seminary, inviting them to an organizational meeting.14

Forty-five priests responded to the appeal while twelve assembled for a two-day meeting on August 23-24 at the seminary.15 They set down the aims of the alumni association as follows: mutual prayer, mutual aid in pastoral work, and common action in behalf of the people entrusted to their care.

The assembly also elected an executive board consisting of the following officers: Rev. A. Marcinkiewicz of Salamanca, N. Y., president; Rev. A. Kaupas of Scranton, Pa., vice-president; Rev. F. Kasprzak of Buffalo, secretary; and Rev. J. Folta of Detroit, treasurer. Members of the advisory council who were to serve as regional chairmen included: Rev. M. Barabasz of Baltimore, Rev. C. Walajtys of Parisville, Mich., Rev. J. Klejna of Elmira, N. Y., Rev. B. Jankowski of Wilno, Canada, Rev. B. Walter of New Waverly, Tex., Rev. B. Radka of South Omaha, Neb., and Rev. M. Kotecki of South Chicago, IL.

The assembly also admitted three honorary members into the new alumni association: Rev. F. Szulak, S. J., the annual retreat — master at the seminary,

12 Record of Ordinations Book 2, p. 269-272, in Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Michigan; also some individual documents in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, in loc. cit.
Rev. P. Gutowski, pastor of St. Casimir's parish in Detroit, and Rev. J. Janeczek, pastor of St. Wenceslaus Czech parish in the city. As far as is known, no provisions were made at this time for the admission of lay members into the alumni group, although the number of nonclerical students and graduates of the high school and philosophy department was steadily increasing from year to year.

Student life during this period, as reflected in the memoirs of Father S. Iciek who made his high school and part of the philosophy course at the seminary from 1894 to 1900, was characterized by strict discipline and a strenuous program. The daily schedule began at five-thirty in the morning and ended at ten in the evening. Classes started at eight and continued till noon, to be resumed from two to four in the afternoon. Detroiters attending the high school boarded at home and registered as day students.

The meals were plain and none too bountiful. At the end of classes, at four o'clock, the smaller boys received pieces of bread left over from dinner which were placed in a wicker basket on the table. Apple pie, served on Fridays and Sundays, was used by students not only for dessert but also for settling personal wagers and victories in checker and chess games.

Athletic facilities were limited because of the small campus which, however, contained a baseball diamond that was also used as a soccer gridiron in the fall. Baseball was the most popular sport, followed by soccer and boxing.

The generosity of Father F. Mueller provided the seminary baseball team with its first professional equipment and uniforms — "white suits, red socks, red insignia 'P S' on the shirts and caps, bats, masks, gloves, etc." The team played its first dress game at Belle Isle against the Jesuit Detroit College, losing by a score of eight to five. Professor J. Wales, the idol of all the football and baseball players in the school, apparently served as coach.

In 1900, the seminary had three baseball teams and one soccer team. The latter won the city championship at Belle Isle, defeating Detroit 1 to 0. The varsity nine won three of its seven contests, one of the victories coming over Assumption College in Windsor.

On Thursdays, the weekly free day (classes were held on Saturday) and on holidays, students made excursions to Belle Isle (street-car tickets were eight for a quarter) where they rode rented bicycles at twenty-five cents an hour during the summer and skated on the ice in the winter; or they took long walks into the country for apples — the seminary was then on Detroit's outskirts and Hamtramck "nothing but distant farms".

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16 S. A. Iciek, Their Grandson, Unpublished mimeographed autobiography in St. Mary's College Library Archives, [Norwich, Iciek, 1944], p. 53-54.
17 Ibid., p. 57.
18 ["Z Radością "], Glos Studenta of Detroit, [Vol. 1 ], No. 3, (Czerwiec 1900), p. 25.
20 S. A. Iciek, op. cit., p. 63.
The social activities, involving musical, dramatic and literary presentations, took in a variety of observances: bi-weekly meetings of the St. Casimir Literary Society, the commemoration of the Rector's name day in March and of the Polish Constitution in May, and the reception of outstanding guests — the Apostolic Delegate S. Martinelli and the Superior-General of the Resurrectionists P. Smolikowski (1898), Archbishop J. Ireland (1899), and Z. Milkowski, noted Polish author and patriot writing under the pseudonym of T. T. Jeż.

Milkowski visited the seminary in September 1900. He later described Father Dąbrowski as a counterpart of Rev. P. G. Baudoin, famed Polish humanitarian, and as a "miracle-worker" — a man who had the "appearance of a laborer, rough, tanned, suggesting toughness and strength..." The visitor found himself extremely interested both in the seminary and in its founder, glowingly commemorating both in his subsequent account of the visit.

The St. Casimir Literary Society, around which most of the social activities revolved, was the first student organization in the institution. It was founded during the scholastic year 1895-96 — apparently in March 1896 — by Peter Budnik and Joseph Strauss, both high school students, with the help of Father L. Kisielewicz who served as first moderator. Originally named "The Sons of Poland Society", the organization sought to foster interest in the spoken and written Polish word. It collected ten-cent monthly dues from its members, using the proceeds for the purchase of books and periodicals for its special student library, which provided materials for meetings, plays, and student recreation.

In 1897, the society grew large enough to separate into two groups — Polish and Lithuanian — each of which held its own meetings. Three years later, the Polish section began the publication of the seminary's first student periodical which appeared in April 1900. Titled Głos Studenta, it was a hand-written mimeographed paper with a green cover and twenty-eight white pages containing poems, brief essays, notes about school activities and alumni news — all written in Polish.

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26 Copies of Głos Studenta, in St. Mary's College Library Archives, Orchard Lake, MI.
The editorial staff consisted of Joseph Lempka, editor, Julius Chyliński, John Klein, Michael Kozłowski, Ben Mrozinski, Francis Nowak and Laslaus Stefaniak, associate editors, and Joseph Kulik business manager. They succeeded in putting out at least three numbers of the Głos Studenta — April, May and June. No record or evidence of further issues exists.

The students of 1900 enjoyed still another distinction: the high school graduating class was the first to have a composite class picture made of its members for the institution. The photographer was J. Sowiński, the leading Polish practitioner of the art in Detroit.

The faculty during this time, according to Father Iciek, consisted of a "very fine teaching staff". Made up of priests and laymen — Polish, Irish, English and Italian — who by 1898 numbered fifteen members exclusive of the rector, it included "men of great learning, fine character, and devoted to the task of training young men." Outstanding among them were Professors J. Wales, J. O’Dwyer, R. Piątkowski, and T. Siemiradzki, along with Fathers J. Godrycz, L. Kisielewicz and V. Buhaczkowski.

Two regular faculty members left the staff: Father L. Kisielewicz departed in June 1897 to take up parish work while Professor P. Panek returned to his native Poland in 1898 where he devoted himself to journalism.

Several new members joined the faculty. Two came in 1896: Professor Thomas Siemiradzki, a graduate of Leipzig University, taught classical languages and history until 1901, while Professor Reginald Jones, a graduate of Cambridge University, taught mathematics for one semester. Following his departure, a student of theology, Maximilian Kotecki, taught arithmetic in the high school until his ordination in 1898.

Father John Godrycz, who taught philosophy and history, took over the teaching of Scripture, liturgy, church history and Latin after his ordination in 1897. The following year, Camillo Napolitano took charge of instrumental music, while chant was taught by F. Gorzelniawski, a Ratisbon graduate. Andrew Kołodziej, recently arrived from Krakow where he had taught

27 S. A. Iciek, op. cit., p. 61.
28 Ibid., p. 61; [Hoffmann Brothers], Hoffmann's Catholic Directory, Almanac and Clergy List — Quarterly for the Year of Our Lord 1898, Milwaukee, Wiltzius, 1898, p. 255.
31 [D. & J. Sadlier], op. cit., p. 294.
32 Record of Ordinations Book 2, p. 270, in loc. cit.; [Hoffmann Brothers], op. cit., p. 255.
at St. Anne's Gymnasium, became teacher of classical languages; in 1898, H. Weber also joined the faculty as teacher of English; he had fifteen years experience in the Detroit public schools. 34

In 1899, the faculty gained members in the persons of Rev. John Moneta, an alumnus of the seminary, who taught physics, mathematics, chemistry, homiletics and church history over a period of four years. 35

In the fall of 1900, as Father Godrycz took temporary leave of the faculty to pursue graduate studies in Rome, two alumni came from the Eternal City to join the faculty. One was Rev. Dr. Joseph Chylewski who taught for only one year and then took up parochial work in Wisconsin; the other was Rev. Leon Jarecki who worked in the seminary for seventeen years, teaching scripture, philosophy, Christian doctrine and Greek. 36

The faculty may also have included for a short time the following three lajmen: August Cyrowski, "the director of the student orchestra" in 1897; Leopold Kościński, described as "a professor at the Polish Seminary" in 1898; and Lucca Mobili reported as the director of the student choir in 1898. 37 Of the three, only the last was later listed as a professor in the silver jubilee chronicle of the institution. The first two were students at the seminary, but they may also have done some teaching at the same time.

Several members of the faculty engaged in literary work outside their curricular duties. Father J. Mueller, as editor of the Niedziela, was the most active. Father J. Godrycz published his Essays on the Foundation of Education in 1900; the same year Professor T. Siemiradzki finished the first of his two-volume work on post-partition Polish history Porozbiorowe Dzieje Polski; Professor R. Piątkowski completed his Polish translation of Kant's Prologomena which was published in Warsaw the following year. 38 In addition, professors Piątkowski and Siemiradzki played prominent roles in Detroit's units of the Polish National Alliance, which by 1900 numbered seventeen. Siemiradzki also helped to reestablish the Polish Falcon Society in the city in 1899, becoming president of the revived unit. 39

Father Dąbrowski, while retaining the presidency, discontinued teaching and supervision in 1896, limiting himself to spiritual direction at the seminary

38 Copies in St. Mary's College Library Archives, Orchard Lake, Michigan.
and devoting much of his attention to the rapidly expanding Felician Sisterhood. 40 The actual management of the seminary passed into the hands of Father Buhaczkowski, the vice-rector and professor of dogma, canon law, logic and Christian doctrine. He remained in this administrative post until 1900, when Father J. Mueller became vice-rector. 41

Father Buhaczkowski, a strict disciplinarian, was in complete charge of the student body. Younger than the rector by twenty-two years, he was dubbed "Youngfellow" by the students who respected not only his energy but also his learning. Old alumni would later recall with affection the short cough, the rattling keys and the little Boston terrier that accompanied his daily inspection of the seminary quarters; "getting it on the chair" from him for the infraction of rules; trying to obtain permission to leave the grounds or to spend some of their allowance; noting his favorite expression, "My child, you big dunce",42

To all practical purposes the acting rector, Father Buhaczkowski at this time exercised a greater influence upon the students than did Father Dąbrowski, who "did not interfere very much with us students," as Father Iciek later put it. 43

Nevertheless, Father Dąbrowski as the official head of the institution shouldered the responsibility not only for the administration but also for the financing of the seminary. This perennial problem, eased somewhat during this period by the country's improved economic condition, called for the rector's continuous attention.

As in former years, the sources of revenue were limited to student tuition, income from the seminary printery and donations. The tuition should have brought somewhere in the vicinity of $100,000 if all of the students had paid the full fee of $150. But actually only a part of this total was collected, because, as Father Iciek later recalled, it was doubtful "whether even half of the boys" paid their full tuition: "many paid just $100, others $50, and some who were exceptionally bright but poor were accepted gratis..."44

The printery was the next best source of income. Its job printing as well as the book store connected with it brought a steady income. Most of the books which were sold, however, were imports from partitioned Poland.

The seminary weekly also brought a certain amount of income from subscriptions and advertising. Though subscription statistics are unavailable,

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42 S. A. Iciek, op. cit., p. 55.
43 Ibid., p. 53.
44 Loc. cit., p. 55.
the number of readers increased steadily. In 1896, the Niedziela gained several hundred subscribers when it was chosen the organ of the Polish Roman Catholic Association in Detroit. Three years later, the weekly won still more readers when it became the organ of the Polish Union in New England. The members of both societies received the periodical at less than the standard $2.00 annual fee.

Aside from subscriptions, monetary donations came to the seminary from organizations, parishes and individuals. The Polish Roman Catholic Association of Detroit, of which Rev. P. Mueller, a seminary alumnus, was chaplain, voted a grant of $100 to the institution in 1898. Perhaps the largest subsidy came from the newly organized Alumni Association which may have contributed about $5,000, if its more than fifty members paid their dues in full.

The institution also received several partial scholarship grants from the Polish National Alliance. One such grant made in 1899 to student E. Dolewczyński of Baltimore amounted to $75.00. The Friends of Education Society of Detroit founded in 1896 as a kind of auxiliary organization supporting the seminary gave financial aid to poor students, enabling them to attend the seminary at reduced fees or without payment.

The largest recorded personal donation was made by Msgr. L. Miśkiewicz of Pittsburgh who gave $100 in 1898 and $50 the next year.

The library, which was among the main concerns of the institution, expanded at this time chiefly as a result of donations, because the limited budget permitted little if any appropriations for the purchase of books. The library owed its inception to the generosity of several bishops, priests, and educational institutions in partitioned Poland. Among the known benefactors were Archbishop V. Popiel of Warsaw, Bishop S. Kozłowski of Żytomierz, and Archbishop I. Isakowicz, the Armenian rite prelate of Lwów.

Polish American priests who donated books to the seminary library during this period were: Rev. A. Ignasiak of Erie, Rev. F. Fremel of Cleveland,

48 Stanisław Osada, Historya Zuriąsku Narodowego Polskiego i Rozwój Ruchu Narodowego Polskiego w Ameryce Północnej, Chicago, Związek, 1905, p. 484.
and Rev. M. Skulik of La Salle, IL. The last named sent "a considerable number of books, among them many of his own works," in 1899. 52

The St. Casimir Literary Society at the seminary also began enriching the institution's library at this time, by its purchases of Polish books. A brief report printed in 1897, stated that the seminary library had "several thousand largely theological and scholarly books. In addition, the Society had its own collection of popular books for its members.

Along with the library, the seminary chapel also benefited from the improved financial condition of the institution. In 1897 a new altar of renaissance style was installed along with a painting of the Immaculate Conception imported from Bavaria. 54 By next year, however, the chapel began to show itself crowded, yet it was not until 1900 that overcrowding became serious enough to require the appointment of Father J. Moneta as solicitor of funds for the erection of a new chapel. 55

Finally, in line with these financial activities, it seems that during this period, in 1896, Father Dąbrowski made his last fruitless attempts at the incorporation of the seminary. Unfortunately, no contemporary evidence appears to have survived to throw light on these efforts or to explain their failure. Only two later accounts speak of the matter incompletely and inadequately.

Writing in 1910, A. Libertus (Prof. A. Piwowarski) stated that "in the early development of the institution " Erasmus J. Jerzmanowski, reputedly the first Polish millionaire in America, offered to endow the seminary on condition of receiving a full report of its financial status. 56 Since this requirement was not fulfilled, because it was deemed the beginning of undue lay influence upon an ecclesiastical institution, he withdrew his offer. Writing still later, in 1935, Prof. Piwowarski mentioned a conversation with Bishop E. Kozłowski, former auxiliary of Milwaukee, who said that "some time before his death" Father Dąbrowski called a special meeting at the seminary for the purpose of incorporating the institution. 57

Among the participants were several priests (Father Kozłowski was not yet a bishop then) and two laymen, presumably E. Jerzmanowski of New York and P. Kiołbassa of Chicago, an outstanding lay leader. The participants were to constitute a Board of Trustees in which the ownership of the seminary was to be vested. Each member of the Board was to pledge a certain annual contribution toward the endowment of the seminary, while

56 [A. Libertus], op. cit., p. 29.
57 [A. Piwowarski], Almanach Jubileuszowy Seminarjum Polskiego Kolegium Św. Maryi i Szkoły Wyższej w Orchard Lake, Michigan, Detroit, Stowarzyszenie, 1935, p. 96.
the priests additionally promised to hold collections in their parishes for the benefit of the institution.

If such a meeting was held, it must have taken place at the latest some time in 1896, the year when Jerzmanowski left America for partitioned Poland where he died in 1909, leaving a considerable bequest to the Jagellonian University. 58 It is likely that it may have coincided with the conference held at the seminary March 19, 1896, for the purpose of organizing the convocation of the First Polish Catholic Congress in America. Available reports on this pre-convention meeting list Kiolbassa among the participants but do not mention Jerzmanowski or Father Kozłowski; and while they list the seminary among the items on the agenda for discussion, they do not specify the subject of incorporation. 59 Neither was it discussed when the Congress met at Buffalo in September 1896, for the official report of the proceedings of the seminary committee is silent on this point. 80

In any case, it may be said by way of summary of the issue of incorporation that, as far as the sources are concerned, the matter remains in abeyance for the remainder of the seminary's existence in Detroit.

Nevertheless, besides the financial, other issues concerned with the controversies of the day affected the development of the seminary during the years from 1896 to 1900. Two particular contentions into which the institution was drawn to some extent were Independentism and Americanization.

The term " Independentism " (Niezależnictwo) came to be used in Polish-American circles about 1894 to designate the schismatic outbreaks among Polish Catholics during the last decade of the nineteenth century. 61 Both the action and the name, however, were of much earlier origin in the history of Catholicism in the United States. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, German Catholics of Philadelphia and Baltimore founded parishes which became temporarily schismatical - independent of the jurisdiction of Bishop J. Carroll. 62 In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Irish Catholics in Norfolk, Charleston, and Philadelphia formed temporarily schismatical parishes, with the Charlestonians even drawing up plans for " An

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Independent Catholic Church in the United States " under a bishop who would not be subject to the American hierarchy. 63

In its earlier German and Irish phase, Independentism grew out of several influences: the American legal system of property tenure, the European practice of patronage rights in pastoral appointments, trusteeism (lay administration of church property), the desire for separate language parishes based on national differences, and last but not least clerical and lay disobedience of episcopal authority. 64 In its later Polish phase, the same factors were operative in varying degrees with sacerdotal insubordination and the desire for Polish parishes and bishop playing the dominant roles; to win support, however, the movement presented itself as a reaction against the alleged despotism of foreign — Irish and German — bishops. 65

The Polish schismatic movement may be divided into two periods. 66 The first, extending from 1873 to 1894, produced temporary mutually unrelated parochial schisms in Polonia, Wisconsin, and Detroit, Michigan. The second, from 1895 on, produced not only local parochial schisms in Illinois, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and elsewhere but also the amalgamation of several schismatic parishes into quasi-diocesan units under a separate bishop affiliated by consecration with the Old Catholic Church. It was during this period that the movement produced "the only apparently permanent schism which the Catholic Church has suffered in its four hundred years of existence within the present boundaries of the United States ".67

The Polish chief leaders in the unitive phase of Independentism were three apostate Catholics. Stephen Kamiński, a layman ordained to the Old Catholic priesthood, gave the first impetus to consolidation in 1896 in Buffalo where, with the help of Archbishop J. R. Vilatte of the Old Catholic Church of America, he founded the Polish Independent Catholic Church of America and later, in 1898, was consecrated its bishop by Vilatte. 68 Rev. Anthony Kozłowski of Chicago, an ex-priest, founded the Polish Old Catholic Church of America in 1897 and received his episcopal consecration that year from Old Catholic bishops in Switzerland. 69

Rev. Francis Hodur of Scranton, PA,


64  V. J. Fecher, op. cit., p. xv-xvii.


68  X. Wacław Kruszka, op. cit., Vol. 13, p. 43-44.

another ex-priest, began his schism in 1897, but was not consecrated bishop until 1907 when the Old Catholic bishops of Holland granted him episcopal consecration as the head of the Polish National Catholic Church which eventually absorbed the followers of both Kamiński and Kozłowski upon the death of these leaders in 1911 and 1907 respectively. 70

The role played by the Polish Seminary during the development of Independentism, though relatively small, was not ineffectual. Earlier in the decade, the institution had assisted in bringing about the dissolution of the Kolasiński Schism in which the newly-consecrated Archbishop Vilatte had made his first appearance to fan Polish ecclesiastical fires. Now, at the height of the schismatic movement, the seminary engaged in a variety of activities to stem the tide of Independentism.

One of the more significant of these was the preparation of the First Polish Catholic Congress. Suggested late in 1895 by Rev. J. Pitass of Buffalo as a possible check on Independentism, the idea of the congress won quick support in the press. The first organizational conference was held at the Polish Seminary March 19, 1896; it was attended by twenty priests and fourteen laymen from five states. 71 The conference formally approved the convocation of the congress, chose Buffalo as the place of the meeting, set up a seven-point agenda for deliberation at the convention, and elected a committee on arrangements.

After two more preconvention conferences — one in Milwaukee, the other in Detroit — the Congress convened on September 22, 1896, in Buffalo. During the four-day sessions, seventy priest and 248 laymen from forty-nine communities in thirteen states listened to and discussed fifteen papers dealing with Independentism, Polish representation in the American hierarchy, the Polish Seminary, the need of a Polish normal school, the Polish American press, the Polish National Alliance, the need of Polish labor unions and a Catholic federation of organizations. 72 The official report of the educational session is unfortunately meager. Aside from mentioning some of the participants, it records the selection of a standing committee on education and the adoption of a resolution favoring financial aid to the seminary and appealing to American bishops for additional support in the form of students. 73 The committee consisted of Reverends M. Barabasz, J. Dąbrowski, J. Pitass, A. Ignasiak and A. Matuszewski and of Messrs. S. Zahajkiewicz, J. Stroka, V. Nowacki and V. Nowak. 74 According to the later testimony of a participant, however, the session was

72 [Ks. A. Ignasiak i J. M. Różan, sekr.], op. ext., p. 20-46.
73 Ibid., p. 37.
74 Ibid., p. 45.
somewhat stormy, with several speakers sharply criticizing Father Dąbrowski for failing to produce a public accounting of the seminary's financial status; his retort was that such an accounting had been made to the proper authorities. 75

Before closing, the Congress adopted a set of resolutions and appointed four other committees. With regard to Independentism, it limited itself to an expression of regret at the occurrence of the schismatic outbreaks, condemned the Independent priests, and called upon Polish Catholics to remain loyal to their faith. Subsequent events showed that, in spite of the urgency of the issues discussed, the Congress produced no tangible results toward the solution of any of the problems. The resolutions remained on paper, while the committees were inactive. The chief reason for this failure, according to a later analysis, lay in the Congress' negligence to establish an executive committee to supervise the execution of its decisions. 76

The Seminary, however, tried to work with the limited means at its disposal against the rising tide of Independentism. Through its ordained alumni, not one of whom joined the movement, it labored to strengthen the faith and loyalty of the Polish Catholics in the face of the growing danger. The organization of the Alumni Association at this time was, it seems, an indirect counter-measure against Independentism, in so far as the members pledged to work together for God and country.

On one occasion, in August 1897, the seminary issued a formal protest in the press against certain false reports that Rev. Vincent Zalewski, who had established an Independent parish in Milwaukee, was a former professor at the institution. 77 The protest explained that while Father Zalewski had found a temporary haven at the seminary following his arrival from Europe several years back, he had never been on the faculty. During his stay at the institution, while he was trying to find a parochial charge, he had on several occasions substituted for one or another of the regular professors in class. This was all, however, and it certainly did not qualify Father Zalewski for the title of a professor in the seminary.

Not without effect also was the campaign waged against Independentism by the seminary in the Niedziela. The weekly carried reports of new schismatic outbreaks with warnings of their true nature and published official decrees of excommunication against Independent leaders. 78 Firmly con-

75 Msgr. L. Bójnowski to Syski, undated letter quoted by Ks. Aleksander Syski, op. cit., p. 164.
78 View of unnamed analyst writing in Dziennik Chicagoski, quoted without further identification or additional detail by X. Waclaw Kruszka, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 41.
vinced that lack of religious education among the Polish immigrants was a basic factor in the rise and spread of Independentism, the periodical also serialized popularly written catechetical instructions for the religious enlightenment of its readers. 79

How much all these efforts contributed to the stemming of the tide of Independentism, it is difficult to say for lack of sufficient evidence. But this much can be said: no new schism broke out at this time in Detroit, despite the fact that the city's stormy Polish past provided fertile soil for agitators. 80 Even after the reconciliation and subsequent death of Father D. Kolasiriski in April 1898, no disorders took place when the bishop appointed first one and then another pastor — Father J. Folta, an alumnus of the Polish Seminary — to take charge of the parish. 81

Of smaller consequence than Independentism was the contemporary controversy over Americanization. Sharply to be distinguished from Americanism (not legitimate patriotism but a set of erring doctrines attributed by some Europeans to American Catholics), Americanization centered largely on the extension and use of the English language among the foreign-language Catholics resident in the United States. It was fostered as a policy by certain members of the American hierarchy, particularly James Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop J. Ireland, who believed that the sooner European immigrants became one in speech and spirit with native-born American Catholics the more firmly the Church would be established in the country. 82

The issue was first raised in the 1880's by the German Catholics who complained that, among other things, the Irish clergy were seeking to suppress the German language in the parochial schools and churches. The Abbelein Memorial of 1886 brought the matter into the public forum where it was discussed with virulence as well as vehemence by Irish and German Catholics; the Lucerne Memorial of 1890, associated with Peter Cahensly,


added new fuel to the controversy which, fed simultaneously by other current issues, flamed brightly during the decade. 83
Polish Catholics followed the fray with interest, commenting upon it periodically in their press and applauding or echoing the German viewpoint. On the whole, they refrained from entering the conflict, until the turmoil had considerably subsided as a result of the apostolic brief, Testem benevolentiae, forwarded to Cardinal Gibbons by PopeLeo XIII in January 1899. 84
Although dealing basically with a doctrinal problem — certain heretical notions comprised under the head of "Americanism" — the papal letter was also a warning against the contentions rife in the Church in the United States. The caution was heeded by the contestants involved in the controversy over Americanization. According to one authority,
... in several dioceses during the years that followed Testem Benevolentiae there were indications that bishops made a conscious effort to speak out against hasty and total assimilation of the English language by immigrant groups in the Church. It appeared that instead of creating suspicion and fear by speaking in glowing terms of Americanization, several Catholic leaders left the adjustment to time, and encouraged German Catholics to preserve their mother tongue both as a safeguard of their faith and as a cultural heritage for their children. 86
In line with its established policy of avoiding open contentions and controversy, the Polish Seminary handled the problem of Americanization in a quiet and practical manner. Aware of the difficulty ever since the school's doors had been opened to accept students born either in Europe or in America, the seminary had adopted a trilingual — Polish, English and Latin — program, along with other subsidiary tongues, for its curriculum. From the first there was, as Father Iciek noted later, "quite a difference in character and disposition between the American-born boys and those who came from Europe ..."; in addition, both groups, each in its own way, "had a bewildering mixture of Polish and English in their vocabularies. "86 From the first, therefore, high school classes were conducted in Polish or English, depending upon the subject, while seminary courses were given in Latin.
At the outset of this period (1896-1900), when the Irish-German struggle over Americanization was still in progress, the Polish Seminary issued a statement of its views on the language question. Though provoked not by the current controversy but by the opening of special evening classes for immigrants desiring to learn English, the declaration read in part:

83 Colman J. Barry, The Catholic Church and German Americans, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1953, p. 60-67 and 135-145.
85 Colman J. Barry, op. cit., p. 251.
86 S. A. Iciek, op. cit., p. 56 and 61.
Everyone knows that the English language is indispensable to us in America not only in mutual intercourse, business, industry but also in public life... ignorance of it bars for many the way to public offices to which we have equal right with other nationalities. We must learn English!... Let us love our own tongue and everything that is ours and good and dear to our heart and memory, but let him, who will neglect the English language in the English environment, be sure that he will often meet with neglect from Englishmen... 87

This statement appeared in October 1896. Two years later, on the heels of the annual meeting of the American bishops, the seminary weekly, Niedziela, branded as false a report circulated in the Polish press. It consisted of a rumor that the bishops had decided in secret conclave to denationalize all immigrants and Americanize them instead. The Niedziela cited Bishop Foley's denial of the alleged decision, reporting his "grief at the injurious rumors circulated to the detriment of the Catholic Church."88

The next year, the seminary accidentally found itself the victim of a newspaper discussion on Americanization as a result of the visit of Archbishop J. Ireland. In company with Bishops J. Foley and J. McGoIdrick, the controversial archbishop visited the seminary on November 28, 1899. 89 In the course of his visit, he delivered a half-hour talk to the students and faculty on a subject dear to his heart — American Catholicism.

A summary of the speech appeared in the Niedziela which referred to the archbishop as "one of the mightiest pillars of the Catholic Church in America" and spoke with pride not only of his visit but also of earlier visits by James Cardinal Gibbons and the Apostolic Delegate S. Martinelli. 90

As reported by Niedziela, Archbishop Ireland's speech praised the Polish Seminary and the Polish nation. It pointed out the student's duty to guard and preserve the treasures of their fatherland for transmission into "the great organism of the American nation"; it proposed the avoidance both of compulsory uniformity and confusing disunity, advocated the adoption of a median path, and closed with the promise: "If you, the future leaders of the Poles, will be able to choose that path wisely and follow it, then we, the ruling Church in America, will confidently entrust into your hands the administration of the Church."91

When some Polish newspapers denounced the speech as an invitation to Americanization, the institution took no part in the journalistic fray as Father Waclaw Kruszka of Ripon, Wisconsin, spoke in the Archbishop's

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90 Ibid., p. 777.
and its own defence. He did this in a short article written for the press, explaining the speech as a caution against nationalistic segregation which destroys the religious unity of American Catholicism. On its part, the seminary chose to remain silent, allowing its work in the interest of the Church to speak for itself.

This note of calm confidence, which increasingly characterized its attitude toward the varied controversial and organizational issues from 1896 to 1900, showed that the Polish Seminary was a going concern by 1900. Though still not established on a satisfactorily solid financial basis, the institution had grown in stature during the five years of comparative peace. But this respite was only temporary, a lull before the storm that soon broke, bringing with it trying stresses and strains that tested the vitality and vigour of the institution.

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CHAPTER VI. INTERNAL STRESSES

This chapter deals with the history of the Polish Seminary from January 1901 to the end of February 1903, a span of not quite two and one-quarter years. Yet it embraces an important period of the school's development marked by two painful events — a student protest and the death of Father Joseph Dąbrowski. The second of these not only ended the first (and, to the present day, the longest) rectorship but also signalized a significant milestone in the institution's history.

During its initial fourteen years, the Polish Seminary had weathered various storms which challenged and tested the institution from within as well as from without. At times, these trials had been chiefly external in origin; then again they had had a predominantly internal character, arising within the confines of the institution. During this short period, when the seminary encountered its severest challenges, the tests came briefly from within, the external situation being relatively mild and only of minor or indirect influence upon the school.

Nevertheless, at least a summary account of these external matters seems desirable at this point before the more important internal issues — more important in their direct bearing upon the institution — are taken up in detail. These outside happenings, which touched upon the growth of the seminary as it were in passing, had a special meaning however, for American Catholicism, for the United States, and for partitioned Poland. They included the following incidents: an attempt to secure a bishop of Polish descent in America, the assassination of President William McKinley, and the Września Affair. A few words about each will suffice.

The effort to secure a Catholic Polish-speaking bishop in America began taking the form of an organized movement shortly after 1900. The origins of this movement, however, were traceable to 1870, when Rev. Vincent Barzyński C. R., a missionary in Texas, wrote his superiors in Rome about the need of a Polish-speaking vicar-apostolic to supervise missionary activities among immigrant Catholics of Slavic descent in America.1 Nevertheless

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the idea of a separate bishop for a specific nationality group in the United States was first voiced in 1798 by German Catholics of Baltimore during their controversy with Bishop John Carroll, or more specifically, by Rev. Cesarius Reuter, a Franciscan, who journeyed to Rome in the matter. 2 The idea was again taken up in 1819 by the Irish Catholics of Charleston during their dispute with Archbishop A. Marechal, when they intrigued unsuccessfully to bring about the consecration of an Irish Franciscan, Rev. R. Hayes, as bishop of "the Irish Catholics of South Carolina, tyrannized over by the French Archbishop of Baltimore ..." 3

Perhaps the most serious development in the history of the movement for national bishops in the United States was the German agitation of the 1880's and '90's which, with its resultant Irish-Teutonic friction, was designated by one authority as "Nationalities in Conflict." 4 The organized Polish movement was an integral part of this phase of which it was an outgrowth and by which it was partly influenced if not inspired. But whereas the German aspect of the problem grew less acute toward the end of the nineteenth century, its Polish phase became marked during the first decade of the twentieth century.

During the Irish-German conflict, there had been several abortive efforts to enter pleas for the Polish cause. In the fall of 1887, Rev. Ignatius Barszcz of Jersey City sent an appeal to Rome and then carried his case to President Grover Cleveland of the United States. 5 In 1891, Rev. J. Machnikowski of New Jersey dispatched a petition to the Holy See allegedly signed by 100,000 persons. 6 The Polish press even bandied about the names of several likely candidates — Fathers M. Możejewski, H. Gulcz, V. Barzyński C. R., and J. Dąbrowski. 7 Nothing, however, had come of these attempts.

The spearhead of the organized movement in the twentieth century was Rev. John Pitass of Buffalo. Taking advantage of the controversy over the use of English in Polish parochial schools started in the winter of 1900-1901, as a result of instructions issued by the Bavarian-born Bishop F. Eis of Marquette, Michigan, and Swiss-born Bishop S. Messmer of Green Bay, Wisconsin, he began agitation in the press for the convocation of a congress

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5 Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 362-363.
of clerical and lay representatives to discuss Polish representation in the American hierarchy as the best means of protecting and promoting Polish Catholic interests in the United States. He was soon joined by Rev. Wen-ceslaus Kruszka of Ripon, Wisconsin, an aggressive journalist, who in the summer of 1901 wrote a controversial article entitled "Polyglot Bishops for Polyglot Dioceses" which the editor of the American Ecclesiastical Review, Rev. H. Heuser, refused to publish "in its present form." The cries of the two spokesmen reechoed in many areas with the result that the Second Polish Catholic Congress convened for three days in Buffalo September 24-26, 1901, with sixty-seven priests and 152 laymen in attendance. Among the various means discussed as most effective aids to Polish Catholicism in America, the episcopal issue held the most prominent place.

In this connection, the congress created an executive committee of two priests and three laymen which in April 1902 circularized the American hierarchy that Polish-speaking auxiliaries be named in twelve dioceses said to contain from one-quarter to one-half Polish Catholics in their population. Moreover, the congress appointed a special delegation of two priests (one of whom was Father Kruszka, while the other subsequently gave way to a layman) which was to present a petition to the Holy See for the appointment of a Polish-speaking bishop; after some delay, this was finally done in July 1903. During all these varied and protracted activities, in which some former professors and alumni of the Polish Seminary took part, the seminary itself maintained a reserved attitude, as far as can be gathered from available data. The Niedziela regularly published the preparatory notices of the second congress, expressing the hope that its deliberations would ensure the religious, moral and national welfare of the Polish-American community. But in spite of the fact that the improvement of Polish schools in America was one of the points on the agenda, the seminary sent no representative to the congress which, during the educational committee's session, heard some criticism.


of "the negative aspects" of the institution.14 What these were, however, was not recorded in the official printed proceedings.

Perhaps this was one reason why the Niedziela did not report the outcome and later activities of the congress and its two committees which contained no alumni of the seminary. The weekly also showed some reticence when the Society of Polish Roman Catholic Diocesan Priests, founded at Toledo, Ohio, in February 1902 for the purpose of "protecting the interests and fighting for the due recognition of the Polish clergy in the hierarchy", conducted an episcopal poll among its members.15 The questionnaire, completed in 1903, produced a list often most eligible Polish candidates for the episcopate; the name of Rev. Vitold Buhaczkowski, the second rector of the seminary, appeared eighth on the list, ahead of Rev. Paul Rhode who in 1908 became auxiliary of Chicago and the first Polish-speaking bishop in the United States.16 Much shorter than this preoccupation with the episcopal movement was the contemporary Polish interest in the Czolgosz incident. On Thursday afternoon, September 6, 1901, William McKinley, the twenty-fifth president of the United States, was shot during a public reception at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, dying eight days later.17 The assassin was twenty-eight year old Leon Czolgosz, an anarchist of Polish extraction born in Detroit and baptized at St. Albertus Church.18

The assassination created a tremendous stir in Polish American circles provoking immediate condemnatory statements and expressions of regret. The Niedziela in its first account of the incident called it "an eternal black mark in the pages of history" and a disgrace to "the entire nation, particularly the Polish, which had given birth to this murderous hand."19 The Seminary weekly described Czolgosz as a renegade Pole who spoke little Polish and had succumbed to anarchism which had inspired his evil deed; as a final thought, the paper suggested that the Polish Day Celebration, which had been planned for some time, be cancelled and that special notices be published in the Detroit English-language press, condemning the attack and expressing sympathy to Mrs. McKinley.20

The next issue, which appeared after the death of the president, praised the patriotic stand taken by the Polish press in Detroit and elsewhere in branding the assassination a Judas' action and in disavowing it in the name

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14 [Ks. K. Sztuczko i L. Szopiński, sekр], op. cit., p. 22.
18 "Zamach na Prezydenta Stanów Zjednoczonych McKinley'a", Niedziela, Vol. 11, No. 37, (12 września 1901), p. 589-590'
19 "Ibid., p. 590.
20 Ibid., p. 592.
of the Polish community at large. Subsequent numbers of the weekly presented details of the president's burial, of Czolgosz's ensuing trial in Buffalo, of the unsuccessful attempts of two Polish priests to bring about the assassin's reconciliation with the Catholic Church, and of Czolgosz's execution on November 7, 1901.

Thus, the action by the Polish Seminary in the Czolgosz affair was limited to the journalistic field. But it was outspoken and had a definite influence on the community in Detroit, in so far as it inspired a united and patriotic front of opposition to anarchism and radicalism.

Almost as soon as the Czolgosz matter was settled, the attention of the seminary was engaged by the Września Affair. Września was a small village in Prussian-held Poland, located about thirty miles east of Poznań and having about 6,000 inhabitants. In April 1901, the Prussian authorities decreed that religious instruction in the elementary grades was to be conducted only in German to the exclusion of Polish which had hitherto been in use. At the instigation of their parents, the Polish children refused to comply with the regulations and went on strike. In May, fourteen boys and girls were so severely beaten by their German teacher that they had to take to their beds. When the parents protested against the punishment by rallying in front of the school, they were sentenced in November to imprisonment from two to thirty months.

At this point, Henryk Sienkiewicz, the best known contemporary Polish writer, issued an appeal for "Bread for the VICTIMS" of Września. When news of the appeal reached the United States, there was an immediate general response among the Polish residents. The Polish Seminary also took part in the response. In December 1901, it initiated a collection which by the end of next April netted $1,036.16. Among the earliest contributors were members of the faculty and students of the seminary who contributed a total of almost one hundred dollars. The entire amount collected was sent in two parts to Michael Chyliński, a Kraków publisher, who directed the charity drive in Europe.

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Early in January 1902, the seminary proposed another suggestion — a mass meeting in protest of the Prussian action in Września. After two weeks of planning, a protest rally was held on Sunday, January 26. About 4,000 people attended the meeting; among the participants were Bishop John Foley and Mayor William Maybury of Detroit. Father V. Buhaczkowski of the seminary presided at the rally, while Professor R. Piątkowski served as secretary and authored the resolutions that were adopted and sent to the government of Prussia.

The strongly worded protest said in part: "... we Polish citizens of Detroit, Michigan, United States of America ... formally protest against this outrage against liberty and nationality ..."; it ended by expressing its contempt for the Prussian government in no uncertain terms. The rally was regarded as an outstanding success; considerable credit for this outcome was due to the initiative and inspiration originating from the seminary.

Against this background of external events, it is now possible to review in greater detail the internal affairs of the Polish Seminary. From the administrative point of view, the institution's main problem during this brief period was no longer one of survival, as it had been in the past, but rather one of expansion. Its cause was a constantly growing student enrollment which not only reflected the accelerated Polish immigration to the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, but also resulted in the overcrowding of the school's limited facilities.

With the beginning of the twentieth century, Polish emigration from the three partitions to the United States took a decided upswing, according to European statistics. Whereas, in 1899 the number of emigrants amounted to 28,466, in 1900 it rose to 46,938; and in the following two years the annual total was as follows: in 1901 — 43,617 emigrants and in 1902 — 69,620 emigrants. American statistics for Polish immigration during these years are not available, because from 1899 to 1919 immigrants of Polish nationality were listed as belonging to Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia.

This increased Polish immigration reflected itself in a growing student enrollment at the Polish Seminary, although a direct connection between the two growths cannot be fully established owing to lack of complete student records for this period. In any case, whereas in 1899 the number of students

30 Dr. Mieczysław Szawleski, Wychodztwo Polskie w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki, Lwów, Ossolińskich, 1924, opposite p. 16.
in all departments amounted to 120, in the next three years the enrollment climbed as follows: in 1900 — 160 students, in 1901 — 175 students, and in 1902 — 205 students. 32

Perhaps more readily discernible factors affecting the enrollment were found in Detroit itself. In 1900 the Polish population of the city was estimated at 40,000 persons grouped in six parishes with as many parochial schools; in 1902 a seventh parish with a school was added to this seed-bed of candidates for the seminary high school department. 33 An incentive to enrollment came from local alumni of the seminary, lay and clerical, who by their religious and social leadership in the community as priests, doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen encouraged students to enter the institution. 34 Another stimulus was provided by members of the seminary faculty who played prominent roles in the cultural life of the Polish group by promoting adult education and assisting in the formation of new organizations, like the Aurora Youth Club founded in 1901, and the Polish Aid Society and the Halka Choral Group established in 1902. 35

Finally, not without influence on the enrollment were several other factors. The Polish National Alliance not only granted scholarships to needy students, but also urged its members, through its weekly newspaper, to send their sons to the institution, particularly when Prof. T. Siemiradzki of the seminary faculty became editor-in-chief in 1901. 36 The seminary alumni association, either reorganized or revived during this period, also undoubtedly helped student growth. 37 Lastly, press notices advertising the institution stressed its dual — lay as well as clerical — character, pointing out that non-divinity students were also welcome. 38

In any event, whatever its specific causes, the increased enrollment brought in its wake several problems — tutorial, curricular, financial and residential — all stemming from and centering about the basic issue of expansion.

The aging rector of the seminary, Father Joseph Dąbrowski, now entering his sixties, did his best to meet each difficulty as it made itself felt.

One of these concerned the faculty. With the completion of the school's fifteenth scholastic year in June 1901, two teachers left the institution: Father Joseph Chylewski who devoted himself to parochial work in Wisconsin, and Mr. Thomas Siemiradzki who took over the editorial reigns of the Polish National Alliance weekly in Chicago.39 In addition, Father John Godrycz, on leave since the fall of 1900, was pursuing graduate studies at Rome.40

When the seminary's sixteenth scholastic season opened in September 1901, the faculty officially counted five priests and six laymen: Fathers J. Dąbrowski (president and spiritual director), J. Mueller (vice-president and professor of moral theology, Christian doctrine and geography), V. Buhacz-kowski (professor of dogma, canon law, liturgy, Christian doctrine and Polish), L. Jarecki (professor of philosophy, Sacred Scripture, Christian doctrine and Greek), and J. Moneta (professor of church history, homiletics, philosophy, chemistry and mathematics); and Messrs. R. Piątkowski (astronomy, Latin, Polish, German and French), H. V. Richardson (English literature), F. J. Weber (English, arithmetic and penmanship), C. Sypniewski (Polish, arithmetic and physics), F. C. Gorzelniawski (music and Gregorian chant), and C. Napo-litano (instrumental music).41 It also seems that Mr. C. Romanelli, an Italian-born sculptor and painter, taught art and elementary drawing since the early part of 1901 or the fall of 1900.42 Finally, it is likely that one or two advanced theological students served as instructors in the high school department.

Two new lay teachers joined the faculty during this period. In 1901, dr. Ignatius Machnikowski took professor Siemiradzki's place as instructor of classical languages; an accomplished linguist and writer, he held degrees from the universities of Breslau and Kraków, and remained with the institution for over thirty years.43 In 1902, Mr. Louis Haduch came to stay for three years, teaching history, physics, classical languages and calisthenics.44 Furthermore, in the fall of 1902, Father J. Godrycz returned from his graduate studies in Rome to resume the teaching of philosophy and theology, raising the faculty membership to sixteen.45

The increased enrollment also affected the curriculum. Since a considerable

44 [A. Libertus], Historya Seminaryum Polskiego w Detroit i Orchard Lake, Mich., z Okazji 25-letniego Jubileuszu, [Orchard Lake], [Seminaryum], 1910, p. 18.
number of registrants were not sufficiently prepared to undertake high school studies, a special preparatory class was established for their benefit. Its purpose was to supply opportunities for making up deficiencies without lowering standards in the regular five-year high school program which, in the opinion of one contemporary observer, was both high and varied. The student growth likewise influenced extracurricular activities. The St. Casimir Polish Literary Society increased its book collection to one thousand volumes which formed its own private library. In 1902, thirty students organized the St. Cecilia Club whose members pledged themselves to participate in the school orchestra and the school band. The Polish Seminary baseball team engaged in competition with such semi-professional organizations as the Detroit Athletic Club as well as with school teams from Detroit and Assumption Colleges and the Michigan Military Academy at Orchard Lake. Still another effect of the student increase concerned finances. While the enrollment brought more income in tuition fees, this apparently fell short of the fifty-some thousand dollars that the 392 registrants should have paid in 1901 and 1902, owing to the seminary's traditional practice of admitting needy students at reduced rates or without any payment at all. To make up for this, additional operational funds were drawn from the usual sources — the seminary printshop and bookstore, the alumni association, the Friends of Education Society, parochial collections and private donations.

Nevertheless, the main financial problem was not that of getting money for current maintenance expenses but obtaining funds for the expansion of cramped facilities resulting from overcrowding. The capacity of the four-story building embraced about 150 students; consequently, once the enrollment began reaching this total, the residential accommodations started becoming difficult. The first intimations of the need of physical expansion appeared as early as 1898, when concern was expressed about the possibility of overcrowding in the chapel, refectory, and washroom. In 1900, when the enrollment reached 160 students, Father J. Moneta was sent to the eastern

states on a campaign to solicit funds in parishes for the building of a new chapel; the returns, however, were not sufficient to permit the beginning of construction at this time. 53

Next year, in the fall of 1901, when 175 students enrolled, the housing problem became critical. The chapel could barely hold the students, while the refectory proved too small so that the student body had to be served meals in two shifts; and the classrooms were filled to overflowing. 64 Every available space from the basement to the attic was utilized for the moment, but at the same time it became clear that only the construction of a new wing could ease the situation.

The first direct step toward the expansion of the seminary plant was finally taken on January 3, 1902, when the seminary obtained the third and last portion of land constituting the institutional property. On that day, George Hendrie and his wife, Sarah, quit-claimed to John S. Foley, bishop of Detroit, all of lot forty-six of St. Aubin farm lying south of Forest Avenue for the sum of one dollar. 55 Three months later, on Saturday April 5, the digging of foundations began; designed to lie north of the old building, the new wing was to contain a new chapel, an assembly hall, and several additional rooms for class and study use. 56

The immediate public reaction to the project gave reason for encouragement, as contributions for the structure began coming in from individuals and groups. The largest recorded personal donation amounted to $100 and came from Rev. L. Jarecki of the seminary faculty and from Rev. S. Nawrocki of Chicago. 57 Various local societies as well as chapters of the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Roman Catholic Union sent their donations none of which exceeded fifty dollars. 58 Parishes with alumni pastors sent special collections, while others promised to take up donations in the future. 69

Yet in spite of these heartening signs, the project, born of necessity, was launched not as an efficiently planned venture with ready funds but as an act of faith in the hope that sufficient funds would come from contributions in the course of building. The hope proved a disappointment with the result that by the fall of 1902, with only the foundations laid, further construction temporarily halted for lack of funds. 60

Meantime, the enrollment increased to 217 students, with twenty more

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55 "Hendrie to Foley, deed dated January 3, 1902, in SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary File, Detroit Archdiocesan Chancery Archives, Detroit, Mich.
being refused admission for lack of space. The admitted pupils were crowded into every available nook and cranny. The trunk and assembly rooms were transformed into temporary dormitories, while the chapel and refectory were put to use in shifts by separate groups of students for hearing Mass and taking meals. Living conditions in the overcrowded building were, consequently, "not pleasant," as Father Dąbrowski himself admitted in a newspaper interview published on January 31, 1903. By then, however, the seminary was in the throes of one of its saddest experiences.

The matter first became public on Thursday, January 29, 1903, when two Detroit dailies front-paged the following headlines: "Students Have Gone on Strike" and "29 Theological Students Fired." The next day, all four local dailies played up the incident with reports titled: "Fired in Disgrace," "Bishop Upholds Fr. Dąbrowski," "Insurgents in Sad Plight," and "Students May Be Taken Back." On Saturday the story was still good enough to win three additional accounts headed: "Students Stand Pat," "Incident is Closed," and again "Incident is Closed." A final note appeared on Monday under the title "Will Become a Priest."

The details of what one newspaper called "a comic opera were it not for the serious result to those who wove the plot" appear to have developed as follows. On Friday, January 23, 1903, a group of twenty-nine students in the departments of philosophy and theology held a meeting to discuss "certain burning issues concerning our present training": intellectual, moral and physical. At the conclusion of the meeting, they drew up a petition, signed it individually and presented it to the Rector and the clerical members of the seminary faculty—namely, Fathers J. Dąbrowski, J. Mueller, J. Moneta, J. Godrycz, L. Jarecki and V. Buhamczkowski.

Beginning with a statement of the purpose and nature of seminary training, the petition enumerated three major "disorders" or grievances:

66 "29 Theological Students Fired ", loc. cit., p. 1, col. 7.
67 "Petycja ", quoted by [A. Libertus], op. cit., p. 22.
militating against proper priestly education in the institution. They included the following items: intellectually, inadequate coverage of subject matter in moral theology; morally, lack of a spiritual director, absence of uniform interpretation and sanction in the enforcement of seminary rules, abusive treatment of senior students by a certain superior; and physically, the serving of unpalatable food.

Next, the petition set forth seven specific requests which called for the removal of the vice-rector who also served as professor of moral theology, the appointment of a permanent spiritual director, the naming of a professor of liturgy, the introduction of a clearly defined and properly sanctioned code of conduct, the separation of the seminarians from the classical students, a complete change of fare with emphasis on variety and cleanliness, and improvement of laundry facilities.

In its remaining paragraphs the petition professed to derive its inspiration from collective rather than individual instigation, begged for a definite answer within three days, and laid down an ultimatum. If its requests were granted, the signers would remain at the institution and pledged themselves to keep the petition secret; if its demands were rejected, all the undersigned would quit the seminary, send copies of the petition to their bishops, ask the Polish American clergy for assistance, and publicize the affair in the press.

The twenty-nine signers included: J. Bednarkiewicz, S. Fimowicz, P. Robaczewski, J. Robaczewski, J. Manteuffel, J. Kassakajtis, I. Ostaszewski, N. Łukaszewicz, F. Ścieszka — all nine belonging to the department of theology — and J. Gryczka, S. Jasiński, J. Kasprzykowski, A. Line, A. Makowski, A. Majewski, W. Michalski, F. Nowakowski, F. Wojciechowski, J. Barca, J. Czapliński, W. Kukulski, E. Dolewcyński, K. Marciniak, M. Pieczyński, J. Platta, L. Pochocki, J. Przyborski, J. Sargalski, and T. Starzyński — all twenty of the department of philosophy. Of the nine theological students, four were in their third and final year of studies, three in the second, and two in the first; of the twenty philosophical students, nine were in their senior year while eleven belonged to the junior group. Many of them were, according to the press, "beneficiaries of the house and had been lodged, fed, clothed, and instructed gratuitously."

The lack of departmental registration records up to 1903 complicated by conflicting current press reports precludes discovery of the exact proportion of the petitioners to the total number of theological and philosophical students; but it may be safely suggested that the signers comprised the majority of

69 "Ibid., p. 22-23.
72 "Students May Be Taken Back", loc. cit., p. 7, col. 2.
registrants in their departments which apparently totalled between thirty and forty students. Similarly, conflicting testimonies make it difficult to ascertain all details in the course of events between Friday when the petition was presented and the following Tuesday when the petitioners were expelled.

In a letter written about two weeks after the incident, Father Dąbrowski took sole responsibility for the reply given to the petitioners — namely, that they make an immediate apology to Father Mueller or suffer expulsion for insubordination. Contemporary newspaper accounts stated that the decision to expel the students came after the Rector had first taken counsel with several Detroit priests and Bishop Foley. Writing about seven years after the event, a lay professor who joined the faculty in the fall of 1903 (or over half a year after the affair) stated that the expulsion was voted at a meeting of the entire faculty, both lay and clerical.

At any rate, it was Father Dąbrowski who made the decision known, possibly on Monday, to the students who then held a meeting at which they decided to stand firm and refused to proffer the requested apology. Appearing again before the Rector on Tuesday, they reaffirmed their demands and were told to leave the seminary by Wednesday evening. Their exodus took place at that time, while two detectives summoned apparently by the Rector to help enforce the order watched them, "a rather sheepish looking lot..." The dismissed students stayed on in Detroit until Saturday night, scattered about the city wherever they could find lodgings. In a fruitless attempt to secure a revocation of the dismissal, they sought the intercession of several local Polish priests and of Bishop Foley on Thursday. The next day, they held two meetings at which they reaffirmed their demands and issued a public statement to the press, disavowing any attempt at insurrection, claiming only a desire for immediate reform of "wrongs that must be remedied," and assuming the role of martyrs for a noble cause.

After the second Friday meeting, sixteen of the students left for their homes, while the remainder departed Saturday evening.

The affair held the attention of the Polish press for an additional week after it had lost the interest of the Detroit papers. During that first week

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74 Ks. Józef Dąbrowski, loc.cit., p. 2, col. 3.
76 [A. Libertus], op. cit., p. 24.
77 "29 Theological Students Fired ", loc. cit., p. 7, col. 3.
79 "Students Stand Pat ", loc. cit., p. 8, col. 4.
80 Ibid., p. 8, col. 4; "Will Become Priest", loc.cit., p. 5, col. 4.
of February, the dismissed students issued further explanations, suggesting in one of them that the idea of the protest-petition had been inspired by a faculty member ("Father G.") and at least tacitly approved by two others ("Fathers M. and S."). 81 The first two abbreviated references pointed to Fathers J. Godrycz and J. Moneta both of whom left the seminary at the conclusion of the semester; the third, referring to Father S., must be a misprint, as there is no record of any contemporary priest on the faculty whose name began with this letter.

On his part, the Rector officially rebutted the student charges voiced in the petition. Earlier in oral interviews with reporters he had conceded that as a result of overcrowding "inconveniences" existed and that "some of the things they (the students) complained of were true, particularly with regard to the laundry service which was provided for the institution by an outside agency. 82 Now in a written rejoinder he showed that most of the other grievances derived not from fact but from personal antipathy toward the vice-rector and from the failure to appreciate properly the demands of seminary discipline and the difficulties of institutional expansion. 83

How effective this rebuttal proved in dispelling the cloud of suspicion that had gathered over the seminary in consequence of the student protest, it is difficult to estimate for lack of adequate information. There is no denying, however, that the affair, though itself brief in duration, had repercussions that far outlasted it in time. For one thing, the unsavory publicity left a lingering stigma of doubtful repute upon the seminary in various quarters, on the general assumption that smoke is always generated by fire of some kind. 84 This suspicion drew added strength when several of the expellees — eventually at least fourteen of the twenty-nine — won admission to various diocesan seminaries and were subsequently ordained to the priesthood. 85 As a result, student registration from certain areas in which these priests labored tended to remain at a low or zero level, though the overall influence of the affair upon future enrollment, particularly in the junior department, appears to have been negligible.

On the other hand, the serious depletion of the senior branch of the seminary occasioned by the dismissal of the majority of its members not only weakened philosophical and theological studies but also threatened them

82 "Fired in Disgrace ", loc. cit., p. 5, col. 6; "Students Stand Pat ", loc. cit., p. 8, col. 4.
temporarily with disruption. Early claims that all the students of these two disciplines had taken part in the protest and proposed walkout proved incorrect. Some few pupils remained aloof with the result that, despite the considerably reduced number of auditors, instruction and lectures continued uninterruptedly.

Perhaps the gravest immediate consequence was the loss of several alumni-priests who otherwise would have swelled the institution's contribution to the Church in America. As already noted, at least fourteen of the twenty-nine expellees were subsequently ordained from other seminaries, such as St. Bonaventure's in Allegany, N. Y. and Kenrick in St. Louis, Mo. For the first time since 1890, when the Polish Seminary produced its first priests, there were no annual ordinations at the institution in 1903.

Between 1901 and 1903, the Polish Seminary produced six priests: five ordained in 1901 (Adalbert Nowak for Baltimore, Joseph Lempka for Detroit, Joseph Dawid for Baltimore, Emil Musiał for Wheeling, W. Va., and Michael Kłosowski for Green Bay, Wis.) and one in 1902 (Francis Pattok for Detroit). In addition, eleven others, who were ordained from other institutions in 1901 and 1902 made some part of their preparatory studies at the Polish Seminary: F. Kaczmarek, S. Łozowski, M. Monkiewicz, W. Bartkowski, P. Budnik, L. Kwaśniewski, J. Rykaczewski, A. Stachowiak, I. Szymański, A. Tokarski, and T. Wojak.

Finally, another less tangible result of the student protest and dismissal was its effect upon the health of Father Dąbrowski. Because the Rector died within three weeks after the presentation of the petition, contemporary observers and subsequent chroniclers attributed his demise at least in part to the incident. Nevertheless, it appears to be equally true that since 1900 the Rector's appearance and health had changed noticeably under the influence of advancing years and the pressure of double duties connected with his rectorship.
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90 [A. Libertus], op. cit., p. 32-34.

ship of the seminary and the directorship of the Felician Sisters in America. 92

At any rate, it seems undeniable that the trouble-making protest affected the aging rector, adding to the strain that already weighted him down. To find at least temporary relief, he spent several days at the Felician Sisters Orphanage in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, but was back in Detroit for the Sunday of February 8.93 Monday evening, he suffered a heart attack which confined him to his bed from which he was not to rise. 94

The end came Sunday morning, February 15, shortly after six o'clock in the morning. Two Felician Sisters who had been nursing Father Dąbrowski during the week and who, at his urging had left him temporarily that morning to attend Mass, found him lying dead upon the floor; dr. S. Lachajewski, a former student of the seminary and the Rector's physician, reported heart attack as the cause of death. 95

The news of Father Dąbrowski's death spread quickly, creating a stir among Polish Americans. The local press gave detailed accounts of the Rector's last moments, with expressions of sympathy as well as of acknowledgement of his efforts in behalf of the seminary. 96 Outside newspapers published briefer, equally favorable reports. 97

The funeral which took place on Wednesday, February 18, turned out to be a "sad tribute of tears," as despite the cold weather nearly one hundred priests from various cities, assisted by nuns, students and parishioners filled St. Albertus Church to capacity. 98 Bishop J. Foley sang the solemn pontifical High Mass, while four other bishops knelt in the sanctuary: H. Richter of Grand Rapids, S. Messmer of Green Bay, F. Katzer of Milwaukee, and J. Schwelbach of La Crosse. Father F. Mueller, pastor of St. Albertus and one of the original group of students at the seminary, preached in Polish while

93 Ks. Aleksander Syski, op. cit., p. 182.
95 Ibid., p. 128.
Bishop Foley eulogized the deceased in English. The burial took place in the priests' plot at Mt. Elliott Cemetery. 99

The death of Father Dąbrowski was the second internal blow suffered by the seminary during this painful period. Even though in his last years he did not devote all his attention and energies to the institution of which he was Rector, preoccupying himself in part with the direction of the Felician Sisterhood in America, his passing was not to be written off by any means as a mere sentimental parting. Coming so closely upon the heels of the senior student's disaffection and dismissal, it deprived the institution at a trying moment of the authority and inspiration that had come to be associated with the founder over the years of struggle and toil. His loss, consequently, was deeply felt both within and outside the institution, finding expression in two notable posthumous tributes which attempted to assess the magnitude of the misfortune by taking the measure of the man.

The first, written "through tears of grief" by a faculty member (probably Prof. R. Piątkowski), saw in Father Dąbrowski "a tireless laborer," characterized by "... complete forgetfulness of self, life for others, labor for the Church and his fellowmen maintained with unfailing perseverance and energy along with an almost feverish activity — all irradiated with simplicity, modesty and truly evangelical charity. "100 The institution brought into existence by his faith and maintained in spite of numerous hardships by his unswerving devotion was now his gift to the Church and the Polish American community as well as a monument to his own laborious life.

The second tribute, penned by a Chicago newspaperman (probably editor T. Siemiradzki), described Father Dąbrowski as "the foremost Polish priest in America and the worthiest candidate for the first Polish bishop in this country ... the greatest man of the Polish emigration ..." 101 By a combination of iron will power, boundless energy and unlimited sacrifice, he had managed to perform miracles — to establish a Polish sisterhood in America, to erect a convent, to build the first Polish high school and seminary in the United States, and to give the Church "over sixty priests."

Rhetorical hyperbole apart, the two contemporary tributes did not, it seems, exaggerate the stature of Father Dąbrowski nor overstate the three significant areas of his influence, stressed by later, calmer evaluations. The widest sphere of this influence embraced the Church in the United States. By giving it "two mission churches, a parochial school, a high school, a convent, two orphanages, " a theological seminary, a sisterhood and a group

of priests especially trained for effective ministry among Polish-speaking Catholics, Father Dąbrowski became one of the apostles of Catholicism in America during the formative missionary period of its development.102 The second, more restricted, area circumscribed his influence to the Polish American community not so much in Detroit as in the various centers of the United States. To it Father Dąbrowski was preeminent a teacher, both religious and cultural, supplying it with primary and secondary schools, with teachers and textbooks, with nuns and priests, with literature in books and a periodical, and with an intercultural program that combined the values of the Polish heritage with those of the American environment.103

The third and most narrow but by no means least important sphere of Father Dąbrowski's influence was the Polish Seminary in Detroit. He was truly the father of this distinctive bilingual institution, for he not only originated its idea and gave it a habitation and a name but also established its identity as an accepted part of the educational system of the country; moreover, he spiritually fathered several graduating classes of students by providing them with higher training which many of them could not have otherwise secured for lack either of funds or of linguistic qualifications.104

Father Dąbrowski's passing thus marked the end of the pioneer era in the seminary's history as well as capped this brief yet trying phase of its development. His firm guidance had brought the institution through nineteen difficult years which were determinative of its ideals and achievements. The raison d'être of the school was no longer seriously questioned even by those who, under the influence of the student protest, might entertain some reservations about details of internal management. The seminary had come of age under Father Dąbrowski's patient tutelage; others were now called upon to assure its future existence and growth.


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