

plan on which the Legislature of Upper Canada had commenced some of these works, and to the mode in which it had carried them on; but the English complained that instead of profiting by the experience which they might have derived from this source, the Assembly seemed only to make its objections a pretext for doing nothing. The applications for banks, rail-roads, and canals, were laid on one side, until some general measures could be adopted with regard to such undertakings; but the general measures thus promised were never passed, and the particular enterprises in question were prevented. The adoption of a registry was refused on the alleged ground of its inconsistency with the French institutions of the province, and no measure to attain this desirable end, in a less obnoxious mode, was prepared by the leaders of the Assembly. The feudal tenure was supported, as a mild and just provision for the settlement of a new country; a kind of assurance given by a committee of the Assembly, that some steps should be taken to remove the most injurious incidents of the seigniorial tenure produced no practical results; and the enterprises of the English were still thwarted by the obnoxious laws of the country. In all these decisions of the Assembly, in its discussions, and in the apparent motives of its conduct, the English population perceived traces of a desire to repress the influx and the success of their race. A measure for imposing a tax on emigrants, though recommended by the home government, and warranted by the policy of those neighbouring states, which give the greatest encouragement to immigration, was argued on such grounds in the Assembly, that it was not unjustly regarded as indicative of an intention to exclude any further accession to the English population; and the industry of the English was thus retarded by this conduct of the Assembly. Some districts, particularly that of the eastern townships, where the French race has no footing, were seriously injured by the refusal of necessary improvements; and the English inhabitants generally regarded the policy of the Assembly as a plan for preventing any further emigration to the province, of stopping the growth of English wealth, and of rendering precarious the English property already invested or acquired in Lower Canada.

The Assembly, of which they thus complained, and of which they entertained apprehensions so serious, was at the same time in collision with the executive government. The party in power, and which, by means of the Legislative Council, kept the Assembly in check, gladly availed itself of the discontents of this powerful and energetic minority, offered its protection, and undertook the furtherance of its views; and thus was cemented the singular alliance between the English population and the colonial officials, who combined from perfectly different motives, and with perfectly different objects, against a common enemy. The English desired reform and liberal measures from the Assembly, which refused them, while it was urging other reforms and demanding other liberal measures from the executive government. The Assembly complained of the oppressive power of the executive; the English complained that they, a minority, suffered under the oppressive use to which power was turned by the French majority. Thus a bold and intelligent democracy was impelled, by its impatience for liberal measures, joined to its national antipathies, to make common cause with a government which was at issue with the majority on the question of popular rights. The actual conflict commenced by a collision between the executive and the French majority; and as the English population rallied round the government, supported its pretensions, and designated themselves by the appellation of "loyal," the causes of quarrel were naturally supposed to be much more simple than they really were; and the extent of the division which existed among the inhabitants of Lower Canada, the number and nature of the combatants arrayed on each side, and the irremediable nature of the dispute, were concealed from the public view.

The treasonable attempt of the French party to carry its political objects into effect by an appeal to arms, brought these hostile races into general and armed collision. I will not dwell on the melancholy scenes exhibited in the progress of the contest, or the fierce passions which held an unchecked sway during the insurrection, or immediately after its suppression. It is not difficult to conceive how greatly the evils, which I have described as previously existing, have been aggravated by the war; how terror and revenge nourished, in each portion of the population, a bitter and irreconcilable hatred to each other, and to the institutions of the country. The French population, who had for some time exercised a great and increasing power through the medium of the House of Assembly, found their hopes unexpectedly prostrated in the dust. The physical force which they had vaunted was called into action, and proved to be utterly inefficient. The hope of recovering their previous ascendancy under a constitution similar to that suspended, almost ceased to exist. Removed from all actual share in the government of the country, they brood in silence over the memory of their fallen countrymen, of their burnt villages, of their ruined property, of their extinguished ascendancy, and of their humbled nationality. To the government and the English they ascribe these