

separate themselves from the people, and style themselves English. They are striving at this moment to introduce religious differences in the hope of making a breach between different sections of the people, and are fostering an Established Church, for the purpose of creating a means of livelihood, and also an engine to divide and oppress the population generally. The danger of division and exclusion does not arise from the people, but from their oppressors.

But it is said the Canadians are blindly attached to their old French customs, and that by this unwise adherence to antiquated usages they will prevent the improvement of the colony—and it is therefore assumed that, notwithstanding they constitute the majority, their wishes ought to be overruled, and made to yield to what others conceive to be more in accordance with their views of this enlightened age. We object entirely to this doctrine; yet shall not at present wait to refute it, but proceed to examine the matter of fact. When we endeavour to learn what these old French customs are, which so much offend these enlightened friends of Canada, they resolve themselves entirely into the tenure of land now existing there—and it is the supposed attachment to this tenure which has given rise to the extraordinary outcry regularly raised when the subject of Canada is mentioned, either within or without the walls of Parliament. The French Canadians wish, it is asserted, to preserve the mischievous tenure of lands, called the tenure *en fief et seigneurie*, and this renders it absolutely necessary to perpetuate bad government in their country, because such a wish is wholly incompatible with the enlightened spirit of the present age.—Such are the supposed facts, such the argument.

It would be well, in the first place, to understand what the tenure complained of really is; and, secondly, to ascertain the truth as to the wishes of the Canadians respecting it. Lord Stanley, with that peculiar precision and accuracy which distinguishes him, asserted, that there existed in Canada a feudal and barbarous system; whereupon, without doubt, his hearers fancied that the system prevalent in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries now exists in Canada. The tenure *en fief* in Canada signifies nothing like it—meaning only that the seigneur, like a lord of the manor, possesses an estate, which in Canada is called a seigneurie, much like that which in England is called a manor, the difference being in some matters favourable to the seigneurie\*. Under the seigneur there are certain tenants,

\* The seigneur has no jurisdiction of any kind, like the lord of the manor, though Lord Stanley seemed to suppose that he was still a judge as well as landlord.