

more than those of any other European nation, calculated to repress the intelligence and freedom of the great mass of the people. These institutions followed the Canadian colonist across the water. The same central ill-organized, unimproving and repressive despotism extended over him. Not merely was he allowed no voice in the government of his province, or the choice of his ruler, but he was not even permitted to associate with his neighbours for the regulation of those municipal affairs, which the central authority neglected under the pretext of managing.'

Then came the second era, which lasted from 1763 to 1840, during which the French Canadian had a legislature, and learned to understand and value the advantages of self-government. The discontent which culminated in the rebellion of 1837-8 was caused by the unwillingness of the British Government to concede to the people their legitimate influence in the administration of provincial affairs. Representative government was for years a mere mockery, while the province was ruled by Downing Street officials, and by frequently ill-chosen governors, advised by a council over whom the people's representatives in the Assembly could exercise no direct influence. 'To suppose that such a system would work well in Lower France,' said Lord Durham, 'implies a belief that the French Canadians have enjoyed representative institutions for half a century without acquiring any of the characteristics of a free people.'

Then followed the union of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, which was intended to weaken the influence of the French Canadian section in the government, but had the very contrary effect of giving it greater weight in the administration of public affairs. It was, in fact, the battle cry of years of a large political party that Upper Canada was ruled by the majority of the French Province. The union of 1840 enlarged the political liberties of the Canadas, but it too became inadequate to the circumstances of the country as the population of Upper Canada largely increased, and its representatives demanded a representation in the Legislature larger than that of the French province. For years the French Canadians contended vigorously for the equality of representation laid down in the Union Act, but at last the conflict became so great between the two sections that it was necessary to seek a solution of the political difficulty in a federation of the provinces. In 1867 commenced the new