

8 THE STRUGGLE FOR IMPERIAL UNITY

generally settled without consultation with the Colonial Governments, and with very little thought for the interests or the future needs of the little British communities scattered about in North America.

The settlements were comparatively so recent that men called themselves either English, Irish, or Scotch, according to the nationality of their parents or grandparents. The national societies, St. George's, St. Andrew's and St. Patrick's, may have helped to continue this feeling, so that in reference to the various Provinces there was not, and could not be, any national spirit. Another cause that led to the absence of national spirit or self-confidence was that Great Britain not only held the power of peace and war in her own hands, but, as a consequence, took upon herself the responsibility for the defence of the Provinces. British troops, as has been said, garrisoned all the important points, and all the expenses were borne by the Imperial Government. Canada had no militia except upon paper, no arms, no uniforms, no military stores or equipment of any kind. She depended solely upon the Mother Country; even the Post Office System was a branch of the English Post Office Service. One can readily imagine the lack of local national spirit. Of course the loyalty to the Mother Country and the Sovereign and the Empire was always strong, but it was not closely allied to the spirit of nationality as attached to the soil.

When the Crimean war broke out, the British troops were required for it, and Canada was called upon to raise a militia force for her own needs. This she did. Ten thousand men were organised, armed, uniformed, and equipped at her expense. They were called the Active Militia, and were drilled ten days in each year.