

was not an elective body, nor even had it unlimited legislative powers; but this showed the course that government was taking in the colonies and the presages were auspicious, so much so that a year later the American Rebels invited the Canadians to join them in insurrection, very few accepted the invitation, and those who did were not of the most commendable character.

Yet, the last had not been heard of the claims for responsibility in the government. The English population, in what is now the Province of Quebec, had greatly increased, and they desired an assembly more than ever; while among the French speaking Canadians, the idea had gained a better footing. Even though a good many were opposed to having an assembly that would "have to be paid for," numerous were those who began to think that it is good for the people to have a little something to say in matters of public interest. Finally, the Province of Ontario was giving shelter and living to many settlers who were unaccustomed to French Judicature, and wanted their territory separated from the Lower Province and ministered by an elective assembly. After much discussion between Pitt, Fox, and Burke, the British House of Commons abandoned the idea of making Canada subservient to Great Britain's material interest; the Constitutional Act was voted into existence, in 1791. By it, Canada was divided into two provinces, each of which was granted a Legislative Council—chosen by the Governor or Lieutenant Governor—and a Legislative Assembly elected by the people.

But England had no intention of granting so readily to colonies what she herself had so much pain in acquiring; and especially she did not want to deprive herself so easily of the financial advantages she enjoyed in controlling public affairs in the colony. In establishing the Legislative Assembly, England acted the part of a peevish mother throwing a small piece of cake to her child to stop him from crying. The Canadians had the Assembly, but not the Cabinet; they had the power of proposing laws, but not of insuring their adoption, nor of putting them into execution. The object of this Assembly was mostly to give vent to the people's opinion; it was an act of charity simply that the control over a part of the moneys was accorded to them. The revenues, for the greater part, were disposed of by the Governor; the assembly was only to vote a few sums to meet the annual requirements of the treasury.

But social development had its bearing on the actions of this legislative body. Its action was not to consist in mere words, as