

While such is their social intercourse, it is not to be expected that the animosities of the two races can frequently be softened by the formation of domestic connexions. During the first period of the possession of the Colony by the English, intermarriages of the two races were by no means uncommon. But they are now very rare; and where such unions occur, they are generally formed with members of the French families, which I have described as politically, and almost nationally, separated from the bulk of their own race.

I could mention various slight features in the state of society, which show the all-pervading and marked division of the races; but nothing (though it will sound paradoxical) really proves their entire separation so much as the rarity, nay, almost total absence of personal encounters between the two races. Disputes of this kind are almost confined to the ruder order of people, and seldom proceed to acts of violence. As respects the other classes, social intercourse between the two races is so limited, that the more prominent or excitable antagonists never meet in the same room. It came to my knowledge, that a gentleman, who was for some years a most active and determined leader amongst the English population, had never once been under a private roof with French Canadians of his own rank in life, until he met some at table, on the invitation of persons attached to my mission, who were in the habit of associating indifferently with French and English. There are, therefore, no political personal controversies. The ordinary occasions of collision never occur: and men must quarrel so publicly or so deliberately, that prudence restrains them from commencing, individually, what would probably end in a general and bloody conflict of numbers. Their mutual fears restrain personal disputes and riots, even among the lower orders; the French know and dread the superior physical strength of the English in the cities—and the English in those places refrain from exhibiting their power, from fear of the revenge that might be taken on their countrymen, who are scattered over the rural parishes.

This feeling of mutual forbearance extends so far as to produce an apparent calm, with respect to public matters, which is calculated to perplex a stranger, who has heard much of the animosities of the province. No trace of them appears in public meetings; and these take place in every direction, in the most excited periods, and go off without disturbance, and almost without dissent. The fact is, that both parties have come to a tacit understanding, not in any way to interfere with each other on these occasions—each party knowing that it would always be in the power of the other to prevent its meetings. The British party, consequently, have their meetings; the French theirs; and neither disturb the other. The complimentary addresses which I received on various occasions, marked the same entire separation—even in a matter in which it might be supposed that party feeling would not be felt, or would, from mere prudence and propriety, be concealed. I had, from the same places, French and English addresses; and I never found the two races uniting, except in a few cases, where I met with the names of two or three isolated members of one origin, who happened to dwell in a community almost entirely composed of the other. The two parties combine for no public object—they cannot harmonise even in associations of charity. The only public occasion on which they ever meet is in the Jury-box—and they meet there only to the utter obstruction of Justice.

The hostility which thus pervades society, was some time growing before it became of prominent importance in the politics of the province. It was inevitable, that such social feelings must end in a deadly political strife. The French regarded with jealousy the influence, in politics, of a daily increasing body of the strangers, whom they so much disliked and dreaded; the wealthy English were offended at finding that their property gave them no influence over their French dependents, who were acting under the guidance of leaders of their own race; and the farmers and traders of the same race were not long before they began to bear with impatience their utter political nullity, in the midst of a majority of a population, whose ignorance they contemned, and whose political views and conduct seemed utterly at variance with their own notions of the principles and practice of self-government. The superior political and practical intelligence of the English, cannot be for a moment disputed. The great mass of the Canadian population, who cannot read or write, and have found in few of the institutions of their country, even the elements of political education, were obviously inferior to the English settlers, of whom a large proportion had received a considerable amount of education, and had been trained in their own country to take a part in public business of one kind or another. With respect to the more educated classes, the superiority is not so general or apparent; indeed, from all the information that I could collect, I incline to think, that the greater amount of refinement—of speculative thought—and of the knowledge that books can give—is, with some brilliant exceptions, to be found among the