

I had for years been a steady adherent of the Papineau Party, at a pecuniary and social sacrifice, inevitable to him who is separated from those who may be considered his own people, and found in stormy times ranked with an opposing party, alien in blood and language. The reply to that article of the capitulation of 1759, which required safe guard for the Canadians was, "They are subjects of the King." In 1791, a free Parliament was granted to them, and it appeared to me that manliness in the British people forbade the withholding of any right from a handful of French descent, that the fortunes of war had left in British territory. I saw, too, in their pretensions, the same principle that had been consecrated by the triumphs of the British Commons in their victories over the "Prerogatives" in time past; and felt that an instructive dread of French supremacy, which I could not share, alone prevented the entire people from making common cause against such a Government and Colonial Office as we had. There was something excitingly chivalric in devotion to a cause where one had everything to lose and nothing to gain.

Coming into town in the morning of the 20th June, I met the late James Duncan Gibb, who informed me that Lord Gosford had issued a proclamation forbidding the holding of public meetings— or "Anti-Coercion Meetings" as they were called. "This," said I, "is more than British subjects can submit to. Not only will the county meetings already called be held, but we will hold one in Montreal;" and this I repeated to his party, before reaching any one of my own.

An Anti-Coercion meeting in Montreal involved serious considerations, of riot and bloodshed, with which, in the bitter tumult of the previous ten years, our city was familiar. I vehemently urged the necessity of defiance to the proclamation in Montreal, as encouragement to the country, which might consider us poor braggarts who only dared to show themselves where there was no man to oppose. Timid counsels had well nigh prevailed when, at one of our discussions, a young man in the corner, who I never heard speak in public before or since, came out so violently in favor of the meeting that none present dared to vote "No." The meeting was held on the St. Lawrence Market, on the 29th of June, and all passed off quietly. The English held an opposite meeting about the same time, but no collision occurred. They also held, during the summer, several meetings in the city, and some small ones in the country, to denounce the proceedings of the Canadians.