

they desired that a large proportion of the revenue should be applied to the completion of that great series of public works by which it was proposed to render the Saint Lawrence and the Ottawa navigable throughout their whole extent.

Without going so far as to accuse the Assembly of a deliberate design to check the settlement and improvement of Lower Canada, it cannot be denied that they looked with considerable jealousy and dislike on the increase and prosperity of what they regarded as a foreign and hostile race; they looked on the Province as the patrimony of their own race; they viewed it not as a country to be settled, but as one already settled; and instead of legislating in the American spirit, and first providing for the future population of the Province, their primary care was, in the spirit of legislation which prevails in the old world, to guard the interests and feelings of the present race of inhabitants, to whom they considered the new comers as subordinate; they refused to increase the burthens of the country by imposing taxes to meet the expenditure required for improvement, and they also refused to direct to that object any of the funds previously devoted to other purposes. The improvement of the harbour of Montreal was suspended, from a political antipathy to a leading English merchant who had been the most active of the Commissioners, and by whom it had been conducted with the most admirable success. It is but just to say that some of the works which the Assembly authorized and encouraged were undertaken on a scale of due moderation, and satisfactorily perfected and brought into operation. Others, especially the great communications which I have mentioned above, the Assembly showed a great reluctance to promote or even to permit. It is true that there was considerable foundation for their objections to the plan on which the Legislature of Upper Canada had commenced some of these works, and to the mode in which it had carried them on; but the English complained, that instead of profiting by the experience which they might have derived from this source, the Assembly seemed only to make its objections a pretext for doing nothing. The applications for banks, railroads and canals were laid on one side until some general measures could be adopted with regard to such undertakings; but the general measures thus promised were never passed, and the particular enterprizes in question were prevented. The adoption of a registry was refused on the alleged ground of its inconsistency with the French institutions of the Province, and no measure to attain this desirable end, in a less obnoxious mode, was prepared by the leaders of the Assembly. The feudal tenure was supported, as a mild and just provision for the settlement of a new country; a kind of assurance given by a Committee of the Assembly, that some steps should be taken to remove the most injurious incidents of the seigniorial tenure, produced no practical results; and the enterprizes of the English were still thwarted by the obnoxious laws of the country. In all these decisions of the Assembly, in its discussions, and in the apparent motives of its conduct, the English population perceived traces of a desire to repress the influx and the success of their race. A measure for imposing a tax on emigrants, though recommended by the Home Government, and warranted by the policy of those neighbouring states, which give the greatest encouragement to immigration, was argued on such grounds in the Assembly, that it was not unjustly regarded as indicative of an intention to exclude any further accession to the English population; and the industry of the English was thus retarded by this conduct of the Assembly. Some districts, particularly that of the Eastern Townships, where the French race has no footing, were seriously injured by the refusal of necessary improvements; and the English inhabitants generally regarded the policy of the Assembly as a plan for preventing any further emigration to the Province, of stopping the growth of English wealth, and of rendering precarious the English property already invested or acquired in Lower Canada.

Jealousy of the Assembly, and dislike of improvements.

The Assembly of which they thus complained, and of which they entertained apprehensions so serious, was at the same time in collision with the Executive Government. The party in power, and which, by means of the Legislative Council, kept the Assembly in check, gladly availed itself of the discontents of this powerful and energetic minority, offered it its protection, and undertook the furtherance of its views; and thus was cemented the singular alliance between the English population and the Colonial officials, who combined from perfectly different motives, and with perfectly different objects, against a common enemy. The English desired reform and liberal measures from the Assembly, which refused

Collision between the Executive and the Assembly.