

pronounced. Their plea with the French, who pressed them to take up arms, was their oath, their living easy under the government, and their having no complaint to make against it. Your Excellency is acquainted with the means I have used for keeping this people and their priests in that temper. The using any force or violence against them, especially when the enemy was continually pouring into this Province, might have drawn on very fatal consequences.

To keep up some form of government amongst the French inhabitants, Governor Philips ordered them to choose a certain number amongst them, under the name of deputies, to act in behalf of the people, in publishing his orders, and making applications when their occasions should require; which was accordingly obeyed. This river, divided into eight districts or hamlets, has eight deputies; the other settlements, mostly, four each; in all I reckon twenty-four. They are every year newly chosen on the tenth of October, the anniversary of the king's coronation, and of the taking of this fort. They are invested with no judiciary power, but are appointed often as arbitrators in small cases, where, if any of the parties are not satisfied, appeal is made to the Governor or Commander-in-chief, and Council. These differences, mostly in meum and tuum, were settled before the board, at three set times of the year, when the people of the several settlements up the Bay, used to resort for judgment on their pleas; but, since the war, have been postponed to be composed in more peaceable times. These inhabitants, though not one in a hundred can read and write, speak generally with good sense, and plead their own cases; but as they can only speak the French tongue, it is tedious for those members of the Council who do not understand that language, and must have the substance repeated in English, before they can give their opinion. How far the power of this board extends, has been often a question; some extending it to all cases; others, again, reducing it to a mere power of arbitration. It is happy, in this perplexity, that no crimes of a capital nature have been committed for these thirty-eight years, except to what relates to the defection of some of the inhabitants. A boy, indeed, set his master's house on fire, on which application was made at home, but no answer received.

There are here, persons prejudiced against the French inhabitants three different ways. The first is, by an imbibed