

spiritual improvement of the people; but despite the labours of these, the mass of the inhabitants were in a condition of deep ignorance. Agricultural development was necessarily very slow in a country so constantly harassed by war and destitute of facilities for selling the produce of the farm.

The French Canadian youth found in the adventurous fur-trade an excitement which carried them away too often from the monotonous work of the farm. As we review the history of the French Canadian, we cannot fail to admire his love of adventure, his spirit of endurance, his courage under very discouraging circumstances, but all these qualities availed him little as long as his country was badly governed by the king and his ministers, so often deeply absorbed in their ambitious schemes on the continent of Europe.

When the *fleur de lis* at last gave place to the Red Cross of England on the citadel of Quebec, the French Canadians for a while deeply mourned the humiliation of the country they had loved so well. Many of the wealthiest and best-born of the people sailed away to France and never returned to the colony for which they had struggled for so many years. Though they knew it not at the time, the fall of Quebec was in reality the happiest event that could possibly have happened for the French Canadians. The Articles of Capitulation, which were signed by the Marquis de Vaudreuil in September, 1760, were very generous to the conquered people. They were guaranteed the free exercise of their religion as well as undisturbed possession of their property. By the Quebec Act of 1774, when Parliament intervened for the first time in the affairs of Canada, and made important constitutional changes in the country, the French Canadians obtained most valuable concessions, which are practically the basis of their present influence and power as a distinct nationality in British North America. Roman Catholics were no longer obliged to take the Test Oath, but only the Oath of Allegiance. They were permitted to observe their religion with perfect freedom, and their clergy were to enjoy 'their accustomed dues and rights,'—that is, the tithe system which still exists—with respect to such persons as professed that creed. It was also enacted that