

The settlers in French Canada were kept as far as possible in a vegetative state; for example, they were denied the right of public meeting, forbidden to tax themselves for local purposes without the King's permission, and left without free institutions of any kind, to obey the decrees of a paternal despotism. Books not devoted to religion were subjected to a rigorous censorship by the clergy; the reading of romances and comedies was prohibited on pain of excommunication. The printing press was not introduced until 1764, a year after the formal transfer to Britain, and a hundred and twenty-five years after its first appearance in Massachusetts.

The King's agents feared that if the people were allowed freedom of action they might be led to abuse it, and ultimately to throw off the royal supremacy, whilst the clergy, after their fashion, in that age, deemed it their duty to suppress every tendency towards liberty of thought.

At the transfer, primary education, such as it was, was carried on here and there by Recollets, by Sulpicians, by the sisters of the Congregation, by cures, and by lay teachers employed by the Jesuits and one or two fabriques. The schools were poorly attended, owing to the cold winters and bad roads, the poverty of the settlers, the long distance to be traversed, and the withdrawal of the children so soon as they were able to help their parents in the bush. Reading, writing, arithmetic and simple division, and catechism constituted the modest curriculum. The children took away with them little more than a knowledge of the catechism, sufficient to enable them to make their first communion.

The clergy were taunted by Lahontan with maintaining inquisitorial rule, but no one thought of blaming them for the illiteracy which prevailed in the rural parishes since illiteracy was the rule rather than the exception among rural populations all over the world. Had they been arraigned for teaching religion to the neglect of other subjects, they would probably have answered in the words of Newman's famous passage, that "it would be a gain to this country, were it vastly more superstitious, more bigoted, more gloomy, more fierce in its religion than at present it shows itself to be." It was their profound conviction that subjects other than religion were of comparatively little importance to the common people.

The Puritans of New England set great store on Christian instruction in the elementary schools, but paid more attention than the Canadian "religious" to other branches. The system which they founded has come under State control. Owing to the necessity for maintaining impartiality in the presence of so many different creeds, religious instruction has been well-nigh relegated to the Church, the Sunday school, and the family; whereas in French Canada the belief that the elementary school should be, for the most part, a place for the inculcation of religious knowledge in the form of Roman Catholicism—a nursery, so to say, for the parish church—still holds the field.

In the very beginning there were quarrels between the despotism of the Church and the civil power in Canada. The Archbishop of Rouen regarded the colony as a dependence of his diocese. He gave letters to the Governor commanding that the religious affairs in Canada should be submitted to the inspection of the Jesuits. The Governor wrote to Paris that a bishop was needed in Canada. The Pope, in 1657, erected Canada into a bishopric, and appointed M. de Laval thereto.

So soon as Laval arrived in Quebec, in 1659, dissensions arose between him and the Governor on the subject of presence in the council and of paying for the incense in the church.

Since the commencement of the colony missionaries had been invested with civil power as well as religious in the parishes. The priests everywhere throughout Canada believed themselves to be clothed with the same bipartite authority. Much more the Bishop—he considered himself the arbitrator in all things civil, military, and ecclesiastical. The jealousy of the Governor and the people was so excited by these pretensions that the King was forced to publish an edict in which it was ordered that "all civil, criminal, and police causes shall be brought before the judge appointed by the company, and, in appeal, before the Governor, unless so important as to be required to be brought before the Parliament of Paris."

This edict was thought sufficient to restrain the eagerness of the Catholic clergy, that, after grasping a certain

amount of the revenue and a certain amount of the authority, monopolizing the instruction of youths as well, was reaching out to grab the "round world and they that dwell therein."

The Sieur Nicolas Denys de Fronsac, in 1632, in company with the commander, de Razilly, and Charles de St. Etienne, Chevalier de la Tour, obtained each a third of Acadia and the government thereof, which was divided between them. Nicolas Denys was made Royal Governor, but in 1654, because he was a Huguenot, his enemy, Le Borgne, planned an armed expedition against him, fixed an ambush, and captured him, and carried him a prisoner to Port Royal. His Protestant English friends, however, invaded Acadia and released him and he retired to his fort at Canseau. Again, because of the continued good will the English of Boston bore him, he fell under suspicion of the Catholics, who excited the King of France to deprive him of his commission of Governor, which was transferred to Giran lière. That person, by aid of troops, made war on Denys, seized the ships by which he traded with the New England colonies, and his treasures at Cape Breton, besieged him in his fort at Canseau, and finally forced him to flee from the country. The loss of the most important, most enterprising, liberal and best educated person, was a severe blow to the province. He was the earliest historian of the country. His geographical and political history was published in 1672 in two volumes, and was deemed very valuable. In 1663 he so far recovered his position that he returned and was made a Lieutenant-General by the King. In 1667 he and four others of the country were enscribed in the rolls of nobility by Talon, Minister of France, at the command of the King. He claimed by descent from Forsath de Fronsac the title of Viscomte de Fronsac. His son, Richard Denys, Sieur de Fronsac, was Governor of Gaspé, and his grandson, de la Ronde, drove the English under Nicholson from Port Royal in 1707. De la Ronde was sent by the Governor, the Count de Costebelle, as envoy to New England in 1711, and, in 1746, he was engaged in encouraging the manufacture of salt in Canada. Yet another descendant, Denys de Bonaventure, was one of the most noted naval commanders of Canada and an admiral of France. By persecution, violence, and, finally, by compulsion, the descendants of this family, with many others, were forced into the papal creed and taught to forget that their sires had been comrades of Henry of Navarre, Condé, and the great Coligni, in their heroic struggle for human liberty and freedom of conscience.

VISCOUNT DE FRONSAC.

Patriotism.*

IN every quarter of the habitable globe, under the shadow of the British flag, the sons and daughters of Britannia are growing up to a noble and gracious maturity. Among them all, what more promising scion of the Mother Country than this Canada of ours—this vast Dominion, stretching as it does from ocean to ocean, endowed by nature so lavishly with her best and choicest gifts; peopled also by a hardy, upright and ingenuous race; surely by every sign and token, whether of natural resource or racial heritage, the future of Canada will be, must be, the golden future of a great and mighty nation! The years are passing swiftly, our children are growing up around us, the resources of our country are being wonderfully developed. Where, but a decade or two ago was only a dense forest, or a dreary stretch of barren prairie, is now a thickly populated city or a smiling plain, dotted with prosperous and well-kept farms. Across the thousands of leagues of the vast continent stretches the unbroken chain of the iron highway, whilst a continuous stream of immigration peoples, with the honest and industrious sons of toil, the vast solitudes of the great North-West. Eastward, in the earlier settled portions of the land, life is everywhere becoming more intense, complex; wealth is amassed, education, culture, and art have all been given a wonderfully increased impetus within the last quarter of a century, and in sympathy with the quickening pulse of young Canada many a heart is glowing with patriotic pride.

* A paper read at the meeting of The National Council of Women of Canada held in Montreal, 14th to 16th May, 1896.