

availing itself of the means which the extent and nature of the Province afforded for the gradual introduction of such an English population into its various parts as might have easily placed the French in a minority, the Government deliberately constituted the French into a majority, and recognized and strengthened their distinct national character. Had the sounder policy of making the Province English, in all its institutions, been adopted from the first, and steadily persevered in, the French would probably have been speedily outnumbered, and the beneficial operation of the free institutions of England would never have been impeded by the animosities of origin.

Continued inconsistency of British policy.

Not only, however, did the Government adopt the unwise course of dividing Canada, and forming in one of its divisions a French community, speaking the French language, and retaining French institutions, but it did not even carry this consistently into effect; for at the same time provision was made for encouraging the emigration of English into the very Province which was said to be assigned to the French. Even the French institutions were not extended over the whole of Lower Canada. The civil law of France, as a whole, and the legal provision for the Catholic clergy were limited to the portion of the country then settled by the French, and comprised in the seignories; though some provision was made for the formation of new seignories, almost the whole of the then unsettled portion of the Province was formed into townships, in which the law of England was partially established, and the Protestant religion alone endowed. Thus two populations of hostile origin and different characters, were brought into juxta-position under a common government, but under different institutions; each was taught to cherish its own language, laws and habits, and each, at the same time, if it moved beyond its original limits, was brought under different institutions, and associated with a different people. The unenterprising character of the French population, and, above all, its attachment to its church (for the enlargement of which, in proportion to the increase or diffusion of the Catholic population, very inadequate provision was made) have produced the effect of confining it within its ancient limits. But the English were attracted into the seignories, and especially into the cities, by the facilities of commerce afforded by the great rivers. To have effectually given the policy of retaining French institutions and a French population in Lower Canada a fair chance of success, no other institutions should have been allowed, and no other race should have received any encouragement to settle therein. The Province should have been set apart to be wholly French, if it was not to be rendered completely English. The attempt to encourage English emigration into a community, of which the French character was still to be preserved, was an error which planted the seeds of a contest of races in the very constitution of the Colony; this was an error, I mean, even on the assumption that it was possible to exclude the English race from French Canada. But it was quite impossible to exclude the English race from any part of the North American continent. It will be acknowledged by every one who has observed the progress of Anglo-Saxon colonization in America, that sooner or later the English race was sure to predominate even numerically in Lower Canada, as they predominate already, by their superior knowledge, energy, enterprise and wealth. The error, therefore, to which the present contest must be attributed, is the vain endeavour to preserve a French Canadian nationality in the midst of Anglo-American colonies and states.

French nationality not preservable amidst Anglo-American States.

The contest arose gradually.

That contest has arisen by degrees. The scanty number of the English who settled in Lower Canada during the earlier period of our possession, put out of the question any ideas of rivalry between the races. Indeed, until the popular principles of English institutions were brought effectually into operation, the paramount authority of the Government left little room for dispute among any but the few who contended for its favours. It was not until the English had established a vast trade, and accumulated considerable wealth, until a great part of the landed property of the Province was vested in their hands, until a large English population was found in the cities, had scattered itself over large portions of the country, and had formed considerable communities in the townships, and not until the development of representative government had placed substantial power in the hands of the people, that that people divided itself into races, arrayed against each other in intense and enduring animosity.

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