

French to British rule was one that made greatly for the material prosperity of Canada. The peasants were now able to cultivate their farms, undisturbed by frequent calls to the battle field, and were freed from the rapacity of the intendant and his subordinates. Nevertheless, it could scarcely be expected that there would not be a certain dissatisfaction with the displacement of the French lilies, by the British Union Jack. This dissatisfaction was found mainly in the ranks of the seigneurs and the clergy. The former could no longer exercise their functions as administrators of the law on their estates, and although the rights of property were respected, the legal rights of the seigneurs were restricted. The clergy were not, as yet, authorized to exact tithes from their people, nor was Roman Catholicism at first made the established religion of the majority of the population. As the law of England then stood, to exercise political power required a subscription on the part of every official to the King's supremacy in the Church, and an abjuration of the power of the Pope in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. This oath could not, of course, be taken by the French inhabitants, and it was not until the Quebec Act of 1774 that the law was so changed and relaxed as to give the full rights of citizenship to Roman Catholics.

When peace was secured in 1763, and Canada was formally and finally handed over to Britain, a great many of the chief families of Canada left the Colony for good and returned to France. This loss of population was only very partially made good by the immigration of a few British settlers, attracted to the Colony by the fact that it was now under British rule, and allured doubtless by the liberal offers of land made by George III. to the officers and privates of the Army and Navy. To still further induce

British settlement, George issued a proclamation in 1763, promising the enjoyment of English laws, and the establishment as soon as circumstances would permit of a representative Assembly, modelled after the Assemblies of the American Colonies to the south. The time when this Assembly should be granted was left with the Governor, but the Governor, acting it is supposed under the advice of his officials, deferred the promised boon until the near approach of a rebellion, in what is now the United States, forced the British Government to action. Complaints were often made by the British settlers against the system of Government by a Governor and Council, but the French do not seem to have been anxious for the establishment of Parliamentary Government. For this there were good reasons. The French numbered at the Conquest about 65,000, while the British that came into the Colony prior to the passage of the Quebec Act amounted to only a few hundreds. Had an Assembly been granted, as thus demanded, its members would have been composed exclusively of the few British in the Colony, the religion of the majority excluding them from the enjoyment of this political privilege. A Government by a Governor and Council was not in itself objectionable to a people accustomed to the paternal and despotic rule of the French Kings. Besides the Governors who ruled, prior to 1774, were tolerant, conciliatory, and anxious to please the French people. So much was this the case that both General Murray and Governor Carleton had to meet charges made against them of unduly straining their authority to gratify the French. The eleven years between 1763 and 1774 was marked by a confused system of administration of the law. The British settlers wished to have the English law, both