

towns; but the individuals affected by this competition were not very many. I do not believe that the animosity which exists between the working classes of the two origins is the necessary result of a collision of interests, or of a jealousy of the superior success of English labour. But national prejudices naturally exercise the greatest influence over the most uneducated: the difference of language is less easily overcome—the difference of manners and customs less easily appreciated. The labourers, whom the emigration introduced, contained a number of very ignorant, turbulent and demoralized persons, whose conduct and manners alike revolted the well-ordered and courteous natives of the same class. The working-men naturally ranged themselves on the side of the educated and wealthy of their own countrymen. When once engaged in the conflict, their passions were less restrained by education and prudence—and the national hostility now rages most fiercely between those whose interests in reality bring them the least in collision.

The two races, thus distinct, have been brought into the same community, under circumstances which rendered their contact inevitably productive of collision. The difference of language, from the first, kept them asunder. It is not anywhere a virtue of the English race to look with complacency on any manners, customs or laws, which appear strange to them; accustomed to form a high estimate of their own superiority, they take no pains to conceal from others their contempt and intolerance of their usages. They found the French Canadians filled with an equal amount of national pride; a sensitive, but inactive pride, which disposes that people not to resent insult, but rather to keep aloof from those who would keep them under. The French could not but feel the superiority of English enterprise; they could not shut their eyes to their success in every undertaking in which they came into contact, and to the constant superiority which they were acquiring. They looked upon their rivals with alarm—with jealousy—and finally with hatred. The English repaid them with a scorn, which soon also assumed the same form of hatred. The French complained of the arrogance and injustice of the English; the English accused the French of the vices of a weak and conquered people, and charged them with meanness and perfidy. The entire mistrust which the two races have thus learned to conceive of each other's intentions, induces them to put the worst construction on the most innocent conduct—to judge every word, every act, and every intention unfairly—to attribute the most odious designs, and reject every overture of kindness or fairness, as covering secret designs of treachery and malignity.

Religion formed no bond of intercourse and union. It is, indeed, an admirable feature of Canadian society, that it is entirely devoid of any religious dissensions. Sectarian intolerance is not merely not avowed, but it hardly seems to influence men's feelings. But though the prudence and liberality of both parties has prevented this fruitful source of animosity from embittering their quarrels, the difference of religion has in fact tended to keep them asunder. Their priests have been distinct—they have not even met in the same church.

No common education has served to remove and soften the differences of origin and language. The associations of youth—the sports of childhood—and the studies by which the character of manhood is modified, are distinct and totally different. In Montreal and Quebec there are English schools and French schools; the children in these are accustomed to fight nation against nation—and the quarrels that arise among boys in the streets, usually exhibit a division into English on one side, and French on the other.

As they are taught apart, so are their studies different. The literature with which each is the most conversant, is that of the peculiar language of each; and all the ideas which men derive from books, come to each of them from perfectly different sources. The difference of language in this respect produces effects quite apart from those which it has on the mere intercourse of the two races. Those who have reflected on the powerful influence of language on thought, will perceive in how different a manner people who speak in different languages are apt to think; and those who are familiar with the literature of France, know that the same opinion will be expressed by an English and French writer of the present day, not merely in different words, but in a style so different as to mark utterly different habits of thought. This difference is very striking in Lower Canada: it exists, not merely in the books of most influence and repute, which are, of course, those of the great writers of France and England, and by which the minds of the respective races are formed, but it is observable in the writings which now issue from the colonial press. The articles in the newspapers of each race, are written in a style as widely different as those of France and England at present—and the arguments which convince the one, are calculated to appear utterly unintelligible to the other.