

unconditional possession of his fief and to free him from his obligations towards his tenants.

After Mr. Justice Mabane had spoken, Rev. Thomas Bedard, superior of the Seminary, protested against the answers submitted to the Council by Mr. de la Naudière, which contained false insinuations. He said that, if the seigniors were allowed to change the tenure of their lands, they would arrogate to themselves power to divide up their lands and to grant them on such conditions as they pleased, whereby the people would soon be subjected to harsh oppression.

In view of the strong opposition manifested almost everywhere, it was not deemed advisable to proceed any further for the moment. The vexatious question of the abolishing of the seigniorial tenure was destined to find a temporary solution through the constitutional act of 1791, but was to be finally settled only in 1854.

Economic Development.

Neither under the English nor under the French domination, had the feudal system hindered the development of the country since the population had increased by 44,000 souls in 19 years. The census of 1784 showed a population of 113,012, against 69,810 in 1765. The number of settlers of British birth was estimated at about 15,000. (1).

The French Canadians had gradually gone into the seigniories granted some years before the conquest. Those of Two Mountains, St. Hyacinthe, Beauharnois and Vaudreuil, in the district of Montreal, were being gradually peopled; there was also a considerable increase of population in the seigniories along the Chaudière river in the district of Quebec; new settlements were being established in the lower St. Lawrence district, from Rivière du Loup to Rimouski, which had so far been unoccupied.

A new census, taken in 1769, showed the population to be 161,311; there were also 2,874 Indians in the province: 612 at Caughnawaga; 754 at the lake of Two Mountains; 380 at St. Regis; 342 at St. Francis; 103 at Lorette; 101 at Oswegatchie, and 582 at Carleton island in the Baie des Chaleurs.

The Canadians inhabited the districts of Quebec and Montreal; some were also settled in the districts of Gaspé and Hesse. The Loyalists, to the number of about 10,000, were settled exclusively in the districts of Lunenburg, Mecklenburg and Nassau. The proportion of the

(1) Census of Canada, (1871). Vol. IV, J. 74.