

POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES

stilled for the time the internal conflict of races. But with the renewal of peace the political difficulties of both Upper and Lower Canada assumed an increasingly serious aspect.

The political situation in the two provinces in the twenty years succeeding the peace of 1815 presented analogous, though not identical, features. In each of them the fact that the executive was not under the control of the representatives of the people constituted the main cause of complaint. But in the Lower Province the situation was aggravated by the fact that the executive heads of the administration were identified with the interests of the British minority and opposed to the dominance of the French-Canadians. Even in Upper Canada, however, the position of affairs was bad enough. The actual administration of the province was in the hands of the lieutenant-governor and his executive council of five, later of seven, members, a wholly irresponsible body of placemen appointed by the Crown from among the judges, public officers and members of the legislative council. Of the legislature itself the Upper House, or legislative council, was, as already said, a nominated body. Under such circumstances the political control of the colony had passed into the hands of a privileged class who engrossed the patronage of the Crown, received liberal grants of land and were able to bid defiance to the efforts of the assembly to free itself from oligarchical control.