

internal development; the third period, upon which we are now entering, is one in which we may expect to reap the fruits of union and development heretofore accomplished. We have become a nation, and as a nation are brought into developed relations with the people with whom we are constitutionally united, and into fresh relations with the other nations of the world. We might find in the earlier stages past our equivalent to the heroic period of classic European history. It was a scene of physical struggle and pioneer difficulties, of Indian ravages, and internecine war between the rival European settlements, ending in their merging into one people. The early narrative is rich in records of daring and devotion, full of semi-legendary adventure and romantic individuality. This pioneer or colonizing stage, beginning with the discovery by the Cabots, ends at the session of New France in 1760. Within this period falls the establishment of the various French and English settlements in Acadia and Canada, and the discoveries from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Mississippi.

The period was chiefly devoted to exploration, a pursuit which seems to have especially suited the French genius in that age. It was carried on enthusiastically and effectively by French missionaries, French merchant adventurers, and the native French-Canadian races which grew up in New France. Over all the continent the French-Canadian voyageur made himself known as a marked and picturesque feature of pioneer history. He has left his traces in local names and traditions, southward as far as Texas, north-westward along the lakes and plains to the Rocky Mountains, and across their seemingly impassable heights to the Pacific shores of Oregon and Washington. When John Jacob Astor, early in the present century, undertook his bold but unfortunate expedition to found Astoria on the Columbia, it was to Montreal

and its far-famed voyageurs that the Philadelphian fur-trader resorted to recruit the rank and file of his adventurous force. The pioneer qualities had become hereditary traits.

By the Conquest, the scattered settlements of various European origins became merged under one flag, preparatory to becoming consolidated by unity of interests and similarity of institutions. The period of consolidation embraces the constitutions of 1774, 1791, 1840, and 1867. They are the monuments marking the steps in a process of unification and constitutional development by common legislation, and of a growth of internal commerce and civilization. The progress was confirmed and accelerated by united resistance to foreign invasion in 1775, 1812, and 1866, and lost nothing by the educational effect of the internal struggles, which were necessary to shape constitutional development in accordance with the progress of the country in population and public spirit.

This period, following the Conquest, may be called the English period, devoted, as it was, as a whole, to constitutional and material development, in which the British races established an admitted pre-eminence. The planning of railways and canals, the growth of cities, shipping and industries, kept pace with the enlargement of the political machinery.

The present or third stage upon which we have fairly entered I might make bold to call the Canadian period, because the great lines of internal constitutional right and practice having been previously settled, the nation has begun to be occupied in united effort to secure a just position for itself in its external relations; while it also witnesses within itself the action and interaction of opinion of its various elements of population, differing and debating upon great internal questions of social and moral, rather than political, tendency. They are questions not singular or limited to