

Meantime the political troubles in this province had been developing. The interests of the French Canadians or "The King's new subjects," as they came to be known, clashed more and more with those of "The King's old subjects," or the new English speaking settlers. It was perhaps hardly to be expected that a thorough understanding between conquerors and conquered would spontaneously develop.

Troubles arose among other things as to the validities of the old French militia commissions, some of the old functionaries persisting in performing the functions of their offices in virtue of the army orders providing for the continuation of the old French commissions on the compliance of the holders with the trifling conditions imposed. An ordinance was consequently proclaimed November 27, 1765, reading as follows:—"Whereas several captains of the militia formerly established in this province, and afterwards continued until the establishment of Civil Government within the same, pretend that their commissions and former authority of captains of militia still continue and are in force, notwithstanding no ordinance of His Excellency the Governor in Council has ever been made for establishing or continuing them in office, and whereas the keeping up of a militia in this province at this juncture is not necessary; he it therefore ordained and declared by the authorities aforesaid that on the establishment of British Civil Government in this province, the militia before that time established in the same was thereby abolished and taken away to all interests and purposes whatsoever, and all power and authority derived from them, or which any person or persons whatsoever might claim or pretend to claim by force or in virtue of any commission or other authority therein, did thereforward cease, and was thereby annulled and taken away, and any person or persons whatsoever acting or pretending to act under any commission or authority therein, was and were thereby and by means thereof dismissed and discharged from the same accordingly."

Gradually the former militia officers were relieved of their civil functions as civil magistrates, and other functionaries were appointed.

The attempts to summarily abolish the established system of government and the jurisprudence of the country, and the substitution thereof of a British system and British laws, might, at the time, have appeared to the country's new rulers to be not merely expedient but really humane, but it certainly, for a time, kept cruelly aggravated the very natural suspicion as to the generous intentions of their conquerors felt by the patient but high-spirited Canadian people. To interpret the English laws, and to enforce the English system of administration, English officials were naturally preferred, and they were guilty of some favoritism to their own kindred. The French militia officers and official class generally found themselves deposed and replaced by strangers. The change was naturally a galling one, and

some of the old military element began to agitate for admission into the British service. Army officers were nothing loth to avail themselves of the excellent military material in the province, and April 4, 1771, Colonel Robertson, Quartermaster-General, wrote to Colonel Haldimand from New York about a plan for enrolling two regiments in Canada to be officered by young Canadians of good family.

In 1773 a memorial was sent to the King by a few of the seigneurs and burgesses claiming a right to participate in all public employments military and civil.

Actuated by a desire to conciliate the Canadians in view of the revolutionary agitation in the older English colonies, and in the hope of removing all reasonable cause of complaint, the British House of Commons in 1774 passed the Quebec Act, which extended the boundaries of the province from Labrador to the Mississippi, and from the Ohio to the watershed of Hudson Bay, abolished Roman Catholic disability, confirmed the tithes to the Roman Catholic clergy, but exempted Protestants from payment, re-established the French civil code and the seignorial tenure, confirmed the English criminal code, and vested authority in a governor and an appointed council. This act, while received with gratification by the French Canadian seigneurs and clergy, greatly displeased the mass of the French Canadian people, the English-speaking colonists in Canada and the people of the older English colonies. The grievance was that the act unduly discriminated in favor of the French gentry in Canada and the Roman Catholic Church.

When the old colonies of Great Britain in North America broke into open revolt and proceeded to inaugurate their military career by despatching the expeditions of Arnold and Montgomery into Canada to effect the conquest of the recently acquired provinces, the situation Sir Guy Carleton, the Governor of Canada, was called upon to face, was an extremely critical one. According to Allison the whole military force of the Empire of every description did not amount to 20,000 men, and the army of occupation in Canada had been reduced to a perilously insignificant force. The population of Canada consisted very largely of colonists of French blood, and a considerable proportion of the English speaking population of Montreal had come from the older English colonies and in many cases were in sympathy with the revolutionary movements in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, the Carolinas, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Sir Guy Carleton, the Governor, was well aware of his weakness, with a considerable part of the population of Montreal disaffected, and the population of the surrounding districts indifferent. He decided to do his best to extemporize some sort of a militia force, but the result was not by any means promising.

The French Canadian peasants, who formed immeasurably the largest part of the population, were uncertain of the benefits supposed to accrue to them under the