

the government. The feeling awakened throughout Canada by d'Estaing's appeal was a strong desire to be re-united to France. I have alluded to the effect of this paper on the British provinces in revolt ; how the abler leaders of congress, awakened by Washington's prudence and foresight, looked upon this appeal with suspicion ; and I have expressed the opinion how wisely Washington judged, for the sentiment called forth in Canada was purely the re-awakening of the ancient traditions of the people, and in no way were they friendly to congress. *

Nearly twenty years had passed since the French Canadians had become British subjects. The 60,000 of the population had increased one-third or more in number. At the period of the conquest they lived in poverty, many in privation. They were without schools ; without education. There was no printing press in the country. All the instruction which the *habitants* received was with regard to the duties of their religion. There was no outer world to them. The general population had lived in hopeless obscurity, subjected to military service and the constant *corvée*. They had no knowledge of political liberty, and had no aspirations for its possession.

In the intervening period the French Canadian *cultivateur* had become a different man. He had learned the blessing of political freedom. His time had been his own ; there was no exaction of military service ; when he laboured for the government, he was paid for the work he performed. He had become prosperous and rich, and had attained to a better condition in every circumstance of his life. He was better housed, better fed, and better dressed. The letters of the Brunswick troops sent to Germany establish the well-being and the comfort under which the French Canadian then lived. The fact is also shewn by the improvement visible in the churches, many having been repaired and rebuilt, and others newly constructed. French Canadian life had assumed a new character. The observance of their customs was continued without restraint ; their laws had been maintained by the British

* [Vol. VI., p. 331.]