

## THE INDEMNIFICATION ACT

members from Upper Canada seventeen supported and fourteen opposed the bill, while out of ten Lower Canadian members of British descent there were six who voted yea and four nay. The representatives of French Canada as a matter of course were arrayed as one in favour of an act of justice to their compatriots. During the passage of the bill its opponents deluged the governor-general with petitions asking him either to dissolve the legislature or to reserve the bill for the consideration of the imperial government. Such appeals had no effect whatever upon Lord Elgin, who was determined to adhere to the well understood rules of parliamentary government in all cases of political controversy.

When the bill had passed all its stages in the two Houses by large majorities of both French and English Canadians, the governor-general came to the legislative council and gave the royal assent to the measure, which was entitled "An Act to provide for the indemnification of parties in Lower Canada whose property was destroyed during the rebellion in the years 1837 and 1838." No other constitutional course could have been followed by him under all the circumstances. In his letters to the colonial secretary he did not hesitate to express his regret "that this agitation should have been stirred, and that any portion of the funds of the province should be diverted now from much more useful purposes to make good losses sustained by indi-