

The bad manners of these newcomers, their open contempt for the Canadians, rendered the position of the old citizens of Quebec and Montreal very painful indeed. From that time began the struggle for supremacy on the one hand and the struggle for rights on the other that were only to terminate eighty years later. Timid at the beginning, opposition to provincial absolutism became stronger day by day as the people, realizing their strength, borrowed from their enemies—*fas est et ab hoste doceri*—the weapons with which after many vicissitudes they were to win the victory. Later on the intelligent men in the parishes joined hands with those of the cities, and when the demands of the people became embodied in Papineau, he became the chief and leading spirit of a strong party, formed of the intellectual *élite* of the country.

It has been asserted that the feudal seigneurs did not give a helping hand to the national cause. This is a slur upon the memory of men who took an active part in the battle. Their conduct upon the inauguration of the English régime gave a certain semblance of truth to the accusation, but this was simply the result of their education and of the intellectual influences of the time. Before the Revolution noblemen in France had a conception of duty to their country different from what prevails to-day. With them it consisted in devotion to the monarch: *vive le Roi!* rather than *vive la France!* The allegiance of the seigneurs, who were imbued with the current ideas in France, was easily transferred from Louis xv to George III; their royalist sentiments became stronger and impelled them towards England when the French Revolution ran counter to their religious as well as their political convictions. With time the arrogance of 'the oligarchy'—the name given to the men in power at Quebec—as well as a natural ambition to take a part in the government of the country, caused the seigneurs to realize the enormity of the injustice then weighing upon the French Canadians. From that day, though maintaining their allegiance to the king, they joined Papineau, Bédard, Bourdages, all determined opponents of the governor and his