

CHAPTER XX.

Civil and military command—The council—Finance—Navigation—Cultivation of hemp—Lumber trade—Milnes on the sentiment of the Canadians, 1800—Sessions of 1800-1805—Public schools—French emissaries, 1797-1806—Departure of Sir Robert Milnes, 1805.

Governor Prescott, going to England on leave, was succeeded in his civil office by Robert Shore Milnes, and in his military capacity by Major-General Peter Hunter, who arrived at that time and went to reside at York (Toronto). When he died (1805) the military command was taken temporarily by Lieut.-Colonel Bowes and afterwards by Lieut.-Colonel Isaac Brock (September, 1806), between both of whom and Mr. Dunn there arose the same dissension as with General Hunter, respecting the expenditure of military funds for civil purposes. This duality of powers ceased at the appointment of Sir James Henry Craig, in August, 1807. Until then, General Prescott had remained governor-in-chief, although absent from Canada since July, 1799.*

“The division of power between the civil and military authorities was regarded as of great disadvantage, and attention was called frequently by residents and others to the benefit that would arise to the administration of affairs were the old policy reverted to of placing the military and civil government in the hands of a commander-in-chief.”†

Chief Justice Osgoode was vexed at the refusal of Sir Robert Milnes to dismiss Judge de Bonne from his seat on the bench and disappointed at not being allowed to act as sole advisor and proposer of all government measures. Milnes charged him with insolent conduct, as having laid aside all decorum, and of having made use of disrespectful language towards the lieutenant-governor at a large private party, etc. The mis-

*Dr. Douglas Brymner: *Canadian Archives*, 1892, p. VI., VII.

†Dr Douglas Brymner: *Canadian Archives*, 1892, p. VI.

understanding between the two high officials continued till the retirement of Osgoode in 1802.”*

The finances of the province were under the control of the Governor-General and his advisors. A large proportion of the money was spent on sinecures which the assembly would have wished to see abolished. When Sir Robert Milnes said that as long as there was a deficit in the annual accounts, the assembly will not care to assume the direction of the finances, he showed that he did not understand the character of the representations made on that subject. The deficit could be avoided simply by reducing the expenditure to the needful requirements. As early as 1793 the assembly had said to Lord Dorchester: “By receiving from Your Excellency an account of the receipts of the provincial revenue, we shall be enabled to deliberate on the means by which they may be rendered more productive; and penetrated with gratitude to the parent state for having hitherto defrayed the surplus expenditure of the province, we flatter ourselves that, in consideration of our situation, we shall continue to experience her generous assistance.” In many instances the revenue was reduced to the minimum of the low rate of rent, etc., charged on government properties. The St. Maurice forges, for instance, were leased at £20 per annum, whilst £500 would not have been too much.

“The people thought that the Act of 1791 placed the government of the country in their hands. Not so. Both Upper and Lower Canada soon found that the Governor-General and his ministers did not feel themselves bound to regard the views of the people’s representatives or to dispense the patronage of the government with their consent or advice.”†

In the year 1800 died Father Jean-Joseph Cazot, the last of the Jesuit order in Canada. A few weeks later died Father Félix Berey, a Canadian, superior of the Recollets, who left three of his colleagues: Louis Demers, Théophile Dugast, Canadians, and a lay brother by the name of Marc. Of the Recollect Order nothing was said at that time because they possessed very few properties, which went to the Crown as a matter of course, it seems; but the Jesuit estate was taken possession of as naturally reverting

*Dr. Douglas Brymner: *Canadian Archives*, 1892, p. VI.

†Honourable G. W. Ross: *The Plains of Abraham*, p. 9.

also to His Majesty. The assembly, then in session, presented an address asking to investigate the claim which the province may have on the lands, etc., of the extinct order. No action was taken on the subject.

The short session (5th March to 29th May) of 1800 was occupied by various debates relative to war with France; electoral reform; administration of justice; public functionaries elected as members of the assembly; education, Jesuits' estates. The summer following, general elections took place for the third Parliament. Members elected:—

- Gaspé.—William Vandevelden.
 Corwallis.—Joseph Boucher, Alexandre Menut.
 Devon.—Bernard Peltier, jr., F. Bernier.
 Hertford.—Michel Tellier, Louis Blais.
 Dorchester.—John Caldwell, Thomas Taschereau.
 Buckinghamshire.—John Craigie, Louis Gouin.
 William-Henry or Sorel.—Jonathan Sewell.
 Bedford.—John Steele.
 Richelieu.—Louis E. Hubert, B. Livernois.
 Surry.—P. de Rocheblave, F. Lévesque.
 Kent.—Ant. M. Lafontaine, François Viger.
 Huntingdon.—J. F. Perrault, J. B. Raimond.
 York.—Joseph Bédard, L. C. Foucher.
 Montreal county.—Joseph Papineau, Thomas Walker.
 Montreal East.—P. L. Panet, F. Badgley.
 Montreal West.—James McGill, J. Périnault.
 Effingham.—C. B. Boue, André Nadon.
 Leinster.—Joseph Beaumont, J. Archambault.
 Warwick.—James Cuthbert, Ross Cuthbert.
 Saint-Maurice.—T. Coffin, Matthew Bell.
 Three Rivers.—P. A. de Bonne, John Lees.
 Hampshire.—Joseph Planté, François Huot.
 Quebec county.—Louis Paquet, M. A. Berthelot.
 Quebec upper town.—J. A. Panet, A. J. Raby.
 Quebec lower town.—Robert Lester, J. Young.

Orleans Island.—Jérôme Martineau.

Northumberland.—J. M. Poulin, Pierre Bédard.

A son of Judge Panet of Quebec was pressed in London by a detachment of H.M.S. "Excellent," and served two years as a common seaman in the Mediterranean before Sir Robert Shore Milnes succeeded in obtaining his release. John Queen, apprentice to a hatter named John Digouard at Quebec, a boy of eighteen and who had never been at sea, was carried off by a gang of H.M.S. "Orpheus." Sir Robert applied for his liberation also, but we have nothing to show how the matter closed.

To a committee of council, composed of the Chief Justice, the Lord Bishop, M. M. Finlay, Young, Baby and Dunn, was referred the decision concerning applications for grants of lands. As a remuneration for the time occupied and the labour involved in that work, each of the six councillors were given a quarter of a township. A township of ten miles square was calculated, after excluding the Crown and Church reserves, to contain about 44,000 acres, worth, on the average, for those whose outline only had been run, fifteen pence currency an acre, the total value of which, deducting the cost of survey and subdivisions and the fees, was somewhat under £2,500. In a despatch of the 24th February, 1802, Sir Robert Milnes explained the method adopted by persons applying for such grants, to evade the regulations, by an underhand arrangement with the leader of an association of six applicants, by which he was able to become possessor of five-sixths of the township, or nearly 37,000 acres, instead of the 1,200 intended to be his share."*

Great importance was attached to the cultivation and preparation of flax and hemp to be used for cordage for the British navy. An Act was passed in 1802, and the subject, says Sir Robert Milnes, was taken up with considerable spirit in the districts of Quebec and Montreal, in which committees had been established, who issued circulars for the purpose of encouraging the industry. The Act provided for an appropriation of £1,200 currency to enable the inhabitants "to enter on the culture of hemp with facility and advantage." Premiums were also offered by societies. In 1804, Mr. Isaac Winslow Clarke, chairman of the Montreal committee, re-

*Dr. Douglas Brymner: *Canadian Archives*, 1892, p. XI.

ceived the gold medal from the Society of Arts, etc., for hemp grown in Lower Canada. This industry did not prosper, because Russia produced the same article, and it was found could sell it at a lower rate than the Canadians. Among the applicants for land to be set apart for him as a bounty for raising hemp was Philemon Wright, who asked for Kettle Island, opposite Templeton, a few miles below the present City of Ottawa. Mr. Wright had already a considerable establishment in the adjoining township of Hull. Seeing the failure of the flax and hemp enterprise he turned his attention to the lumber business and founded that branch of national industry on the Ottawa.*

Writing to the Duke of Portland, 1st November, 1800, Lieutenant-Governor Milnes describes the state of the popular influence in the province: "Several causes at present unite in daily lessening the power of the aristocratic body. . . . The first and most important of these causes, I am of opinion, arises from the manner in which the province was originally settled; that is from the independent tenure by which the habitants hold their lands; and, on the other hand, from the inconsiderable power retained by those called the seigneurs, and the little disposition they feel to increase their influence or improve their fortune by trade. Hence, by degrees, the Canadian gentry have nearly become extinct, and few of them, on their own territory, have the means of living in a more affluent and imposing style than the simple habitants, who feel themselves in every respect as independent as the seigneur himself, with whom they have no further connection than merely the obligation of having their corn ground at his mills, paying the toll of a fourteenth bushel, which they considered more as a burdensome tax than as a return to him for the land conceded by his family to their ancestors forever, upon no harder condition than the obligation above mentioned, a trifling rent, and that of paying a twelfth to the seigneur upon any transfer of the lands.

"The second cause which I apprehend tends to lessen the influence of government is the prevalence of the Roman Catholic religion and the independence of the priesthood . . . the whole patronage of the church has been thrown into the hands of the Roman Catholic Bishop, and all con-

*Dr. Douglas Brymner: *Canadian Archives*, 1892, p. XXIII.

nection between the government and the people through that channel is cut off. . . . A singular instance lately occurred of this independence. . . . In justice to the Canadian Bishop, I must add, that upon my representation, he did everything that was proper to be done on the occasion. . . . The present Catholic Bishop is extremely well disposed to the government. He is allowed by His Majesty £200 per annum as superintendent of the Catholic Church, in addition to which he receives from government a rent of £150 a year for the use of the Bishop's palace at Quebec, which is occupied by public offices. He has lately applied to us for an increase of his rent, signifying at the same time that his income is very inadequate to the calls which are made upon it, which I have reason to believe is a just sentiment. This application offers an occasion of attaching the Catholic Bishop more particularly to the government. . . . The priests have a twenty-sixth of all the grain, which may be valued at £25,000 or £26,000 a year, which alone must make their influence very considerable, and especially as the religious bodies are in possession of nearly one-fourth of all the seigniorial rights granted before the conquest, excepting the Jesuit estates. There are 123 parishes and 120 parish priests.

“Another consideration which has greatly tended to lessen the influence of government since the conquest, has arisen from the necessity which then existed of disembodiment of the militia. . . . The principal person in every parish is in general the priest, next the captain of militia, and it is through the latter that any business is transacted by government. . . . I am inclined to think that much may be done first through the priests, and secondly by means of the militia. . . . The population is computed at about 160,000 souls, nine-tenths of whom reside in the parishes before described, distinct from the towns, and from these are drawn the militia, which amount to 37,904 between the ages of 16 and 60. In the parishes there are 292 captains of militia, who are chosen from amongst the most respectable of the Canadian habitants (the Etat Major amounting to 16, being in general chosen from among the seigneurs). And here it is necessary to inform Your Grace how far under the dominion of France the body of the people were regulated in all public matters by the officers of militia, the captains of militia being the persons employed to issue and enforce the

public ordinances, and the curés, and through the authority thus delegated to them by government, possessed considerable influence in their respective parishes. Although under His Majesty's government these powers have in a great measure been withdrawn, especially since the new constitution, there still remains in the minds of the Canadians, a certain consequence attached to the character of captain of militia, and it is still customary on all public occasions to employ this useful class of people to perform many services for government, which they had hitherto done without other reward than merely that arising in their own minds from the honour and respectability of the appointment; but this though sufficient to render it desirable is, as they feel, by no means an equal return for the considerable portion of their time so employed. If then by means of an honorary and pecuniary reward, or by any plan that may be so approved of by the executive council, this class of Canadians could be brought to consider themselves as the immediate officers of the Crown, and peculiarly attached to the interest of government, there is no doubt that such an influence, from the circumstance of being diffused over the whole province would effectually tend to keep alive among the great body of the people that spirit of zeal and loyalty for monarchical government which I believe to be natural to the Canadians, but which for want of an immediate class to whom they can look up, and from their having no immediate connection with the executive power, is in danger of becoming extinct.

“In the time of French government an ordinance issued in the name of the King was sufficient to enforce the execution of any measure that was deemed expedient, without any discussion taking place upon the subject, or its entering into the mind of the unlettered habitant to doubt for a moment the propriety of the measure. But since the establishment of the present constitution (1792) the case is very different, everything being previously discussed in the House of Assembly, and unless a certain preponderance can be maintained in that house, which at present is by no means as firmly established as I could wish, the power of the executive government will insensibly become nothing. Very few of the seigneurs have sufficient interest to ensure their own election or the election of anyone to whom they give their support in the House of Assembly, and the uneducated habitant

has even a better chance of being nominated than the first officer under the Crown. There was a moment when I even despaired of getting the attorney-general into the present assembly, and though it is undoubtedly better composed than the last, it is far from being so respectable a body as government might wish.

“The ‘habitants’ are, I verily believe, an industrious, peaceable and well-disposed people, but they are, from their want of education and extreme simplicity, liable to be misled by designing and artful men; and were they once made sensible of their own independence, the worst consequence might ensue. They are in fact the sole proprietors of nearly all the cultivated lands. . . . Each habitant cultivates as much land as he can manage, with the assistance of his own family, and as is necessary for its support. And having thus within themselves from year to year all the necessaries of life, there cannot be a more independent race of people, nor do I believe there is in any part of the world a country in which equality of situation is so nearly established. Except in the towns of Quebec, Montreal and Three Rivers, little or no difference is observable in the affluence of the Canadians, but what may in some measure arise from the local circumstances of more or less favourable situation, a richer soil, or a greater or less degree of exertion. . . . That loyalty is a lively principle in the hearts of the Canadians I have no doubt, if I may judge from the expressions of satisfaction which are shown by all ranks, whenever the representative of His Majesty only passes through the country. This I myself experienced (though at that time generally unknown) in the tour I lately made through the province.

“Could such an influence be obtained throughout the province by means of the priests and the captains of militia, that influence when fully established, might be employed so as at all time to ensure a majority in favour of the government in the House of Assembly, and to secure the election in that house of such men as from their education and knowledge of business are most likely to see the real interests of the province in their true light, and not to be deluded by the fallacious arguments of any popular speaker from giving their entire support to the executive government. The defect of such an influence over the elections lessens the respectability of that

assembly in a very great degree, and particularly as from the absolute want which has so long existed of the means of education and the inability of the Canadians to support the expense that would attend sending their sons to the mother country for that purpose, there are at present scarcely any rising men, and but few men of talent among the Canadian gentry.

“While a due preponderance on the side of government is so manifestly wanting in the assembly, it is considered by the well-wishers of government as a fortunate circumstance that the revenue is not equal to the expenditure,* and Your Grace will immediately see the necessity on this account of preserving, in appearance at least, that disposition in a greater or less degree, as there is no reason to apprehend that in case the province could be induced to tax itself in a degree equal to the calls of the executive government, the right of regulation and control over the whole would probably be aspired to by the assembly, which could not fail of producing the most injurious consequences to the colonial government, rendering it from that moment dependent on the will of a popular assembly.

“The burthen which is at present thrown upon the mother country will be fully compensated for, whenever the sums that shall arise from the sale of waste lands begin to come in, and particularly if it should be determined to appropriate the moneys arising from these sales to the purchase of stock in the English funds and the interest of this stock to go in aid of the civil expenditure of the province.

“The quantity of land which from first to last will have been at the disposal of government is computed at about 150 townships, equal to 10,000,000 of acres, which have actually been applied for, including as is supposed the principal part of the ungranted lands in Lower Canada that are deemed convenient and fit for cultivation. Of the above, about 35 townships only are in contemplation to be granted in the original terms proposed in the year 1792, consequently 115 will remain for the future disposition of the Crown, exclusive of the Church and Crown reserves, consisting of five-sevenths set apart in the townships already granted.”

Lieutenant-Governor Milnes would have been astonished if some one had dared to tell him that his ideas were fifty years behind the times in

*Years 1795-1800, annual deficit £12,000.

matters concerning monarchy and democracy. He based his conception of government upon the sole power of the King and his advisers, or rather servants. Milnes was so conceited and stupid that he could not recognize a House of Assembly as respectable or popular unless it was a slave of the executive and legislative councils. From this point of view, he was anxious to find a remedy which would bring the people to the good old practice of obeying orders issued by the executive and go blindfolded without asking questions. He did not know that, once a nation has stepped forward into the field of freedom, nothing but the sword will make them turn about and resume the old position. Hence he thought that by corrupting the clergy and captains of militia his object would be attained. It remains to be seen, and doubts are allowable on this point, whether the people would have followed these two classes of functionaries more willingly than they did the seigneurs at that same date. The clear fact is that, illiterate or not, the habitants had a pretty correct conception of their rights and duties as British subjects.

In a letter from the Anglican Bishop of Quebec, dated 17th October, 1799, His Lordship calls attention to the disadvantage under which the province has long laboured from the want of schools, not only grammar schools for young men intended for the learned professions, or who from their rank may hereafter fill situations of great political importance, but for a not less important branch of the community. "It is well known," he says, "that the lower orders of the people in this province are, for the most part, deplorably ignorant; that the very slender portion of instruction which their children obtain is almost entirely confined, amongst those who do not live in the towns, to the girls alone; and more especially it is notorious that they have hitherto made no progress towards the attainment of the language of the country under whose government they have the happiness to live." He proposes that a certain number of able English teachers should be paid by government and placed in each city, town and considerable village, with the obligation of teaching English gratis. This communication was referred to the executive council and on the 22nd was reported on by a committee, the report was approved of and ordered to be entered in the minutes. In forwarding the documents on this subject, Sir Robert S. Milnes sug-

gested that a grant of land should be made for the establishment of grammar schools and of a college at Quebec. This, he believed, would not only add to the popularity of His Majesty's government, but would also be highly beneficial in a political and moral light, and especially as a means of encouraging the use of the English language throughout the province. In July, the colonial secretary answered that the proposals were approved of and that Sir Robert was authorized to grant the necessary sums from the provincial funds for payment of the teachers' salaries for free schools to be established throughout the province, especially for teaching the English language, the number to be thus taught not to be limited but general. In addition schools of a higher grade were to be established on the model of the English public schools, and so soon as it became expedient, other and more enlarged institutions should be founded. The effects of these proposals had a happy effect according to Sir Robert's dispatch of the 23rd February, 1801, and although the grant to Lord Amherst would always be an unpopular act, yet this was a particularly favourable moment for it, carrying the order for the establishment of a competent number of free schools, etc., having had the effect of setting aside all reference to the Jesuit estates. A bill was in course of preparation in the assembly.*

The "Act for the establishment of free schools, and the advancement of learning in this province," passed in 1801, authorized the formation of a body under the title of "The Royal Institution for the advancement of learning." By this, a certain number of the inhabitants of any parish were required to present a petition praying that a school may be established therein. Then a schoolmaster was to be appointed and a salary assigned to him. A few schools were opened during the eighteen years following, without any regular system, and at a great expense to the province.

In a letter dated 6th January, 1801, the Duke of Portland expresses his surprise that the establishment of a Canadian battalion had met with such poor success, inasmuch as its principal object had been to draw the gentry from their indolent and inactive habits and to attach them to the King's service. Some unknown reasons may have contributed to diminish the zeal of the public in regard to such enlistment. Nevertheless, there

*Dr. Douglas Brymner: *Canadian Archives*, 1892, p. XVI.

was no more occasion to fear the state of indifference which had been experienced in 1775, as coming events soon showed,

Montreal had always been a hot-bed of opposition. After the discomfiture of the McLane party in 1797, a society composed of a few Americans had been formed in that city, proceeding on the principles of French Jacobinism and Illuminism, having one Rogers as the leader, who, it is believed, was the only one acquainted with the real objects of the plot. The society had increased from five to sixty-one members. Six were arrested and held for trial, but Rogers escaped. Among them were many of the persons concerned in McLane's conspiracy, particularly Ira Allen and Stephen Thorn, who were then lately arrived from France. Rogers was a schoolmaster from New England who had settled a short time at Carillon, on the Ottawa, about forty miles from Montreal. Ira Allen had collected the marauders in Vermont. The pretext of the association was to search for treasures, but the object of Allen and his friends was an invasion of Canada, or a raid, with the object of obtaining a large amount of plunder. Not a single Canadian name is found on the list of conspirators. The belief of Sir Robert Milnes was that Allen came as an emissary of the French Jacobins. A vessel containing arms was seized at Quebec. A certain Colonel Graham communicated the first information about this matter in a personal interview with the lieutenant-governor and left for destination unknown.

This state of things caused the greatest alarm; police associations were formed of the respectable inhabitants. General Hunter deposited, at the request of Milnes, 600 stand of arms for the use of the militia, who had been reviewed by the lieutenant-governor in different parts of the province to the number of 12,000 men. In the course of his tour, he had the satisfaction of observing the loyalty of the Canadian militia, so that he ventured on his return to Quebec to issue an order for one-eighth of the militia in and about Montreal. The response was instant and hearty. Sir Robert says: "The Canadian militia have not only shown themselves willing to come forward in the number required, but have volunteered to increase that number to any amount whenever government may require their assistance." On the 31st of July, 1802, the lieutenant-governor published the proclamation

of the restoration of peace and ordered a day of thanksgiving for the blessings it conferred, after nine years of constant war between France and Great Britain. Bonaparte, who in August, 1802, was elected Consul for life, had no intention of maintaining peace, and in April of 1803 war was declared again, which lasted until 1815.

Even whilst the peace subsisted, the French republicans were making efforts to obtain possession of Canada, being under the false impression that the Canadians would rise to their call and evidently convinced that the Americans were ready to help them. On the first day of June, 1803, long before any steps consequent on the declaration of war could have been taken, emissaries from France were in the province, bent on sapping the loyalty of the inhabitants. On the 5th of May, a week before the British Ambassador left Paris, six or eight men, holding commissions from the Republic of France, were reported to be at Chambly. These men had been officers with Humbert in the intended attack on Ireland, and they seem to have made no concealment of their uniforms. Several of them had gone to Montreal, taking names different from those by which they were known in Chambly, and they openly avowed their hostility to the British government in Canada.

A letter from Mr. Auljo, of Montreal, then in London, dated 15th of March, gives warning that Bonaparte is sending emissaries to Canada. Two are specially named: Mr. de Léry, an officer of French artillery, and Mr. Villtray or Villeray, a Canadian born, who was in Upper Canada last summer but was afraid to come on to Lower Canada. Mr. de Léry would come under the pretext of seeing his friends. Further, Judge Panet sent extracts from a letter to his brother by Mr. Imbert, who had left Canada at the time of the conquest and was now settled in France, informing him that the French as earnestly desired to repossess Canada as they did to obtain Louisiana. Other letters of the same nature were also communicated.

The legislature of 1803 passed a militia bill more complete and practical than that of 1796. Sir Robert Milnes thought that in case of a war with the United States the militia could be relied upon, but he would not venture to say the same thing if the French were to come. Only two regi-

ments, the 6th and 41st, with a corps of artillery were stationed in the province, not exceeding 1,000 men in all.

According to the report of Rouse, of Rouse's Point, who had an interview with the French minister at Washington, the plan of Napoleon was postponed on account of the strength of the British navy, but postponed only.*

General Tureau, French ambassador at Washington, who had tried to get into communication with the people of Lower Canada, was made the victim of an elaborate joke, in 1806. Some one wrote him a letter, signed with several names, speaking most hopefully of the chances of French intervention, and giving particulars that never existed, with a perfect absurd account of the state of affairs in the country, but of such colour as Frenchmen would desire to see. The capture of Quebec was a mere question of planting a tri-colour flag somewhere near the place. Committees were active, said the false letter, in every part of the province, and supported by the population. As for the Indians of the Saguenay and St. Maurice (a few starving and timid families at that time) they were ready to throw their innumerable warriors into the conflict. Ridiculous and laughable as this was, however, it was completely taken in, and the letter went to Paris, where it appears they made much of the information. The names mentioned in that document and the signatures appended, with titles, etc., were all purely imaginary. The author, however, spoiled his game in a subsequent communication, by asking for a sum of money to go to Washington and confer with the ambassador.

The session of 1802 (11th January to 5th of April) dealt with the peace in Europe; cultivation of hemp; houses of correction for young delinquents; printing of the regulations of the assembly; public roads; police in towns; the Militia Act; sudden meeting of the assembly in case of extraordinary events.

That of 1803 (8th February to 18th of April) took up the following subjects: Independence of the censitaires towards the seigneurs; the Catholic clergy and the government; members of the House absent during the session; burials in churches or cemeteries. Then, from the 2nd to the 11th

*Dr. Douglas Brymner: *Canadian Archives*, 1892, p. XLVII.

of August, the house sat again, in consequence of the recommencement of hostilities between France and Great Britain. The Alien Act, and that for the better preservation of His Majesty's government, also one concerning the enlistment of volunteer companies, were passed with a strong manifestation of loyal feeling which was universal throughout the province.

The session of 1804 (10th February to 2nd May) was dull, except that all the temporary measures already taken for the safe-guard of the province were renewed with every expression of loyalty to the Crown and the country. As the session advanced the *quorum* was reduced to twelve members, including the speaker.

In July the elections took place and returned one-third of English-speaking members. The fourth Parliament opened on the 9th January, 1805. The navigation of the inland waters of the province was taken into consideration for the first time, to facilitate intercourse with Upper Canada. A bill to enable the seigneurs to compound their feudal rights and dues with their censitaires was unsuccessful; this same question could only be settled fifty years later. The erection of gaols in Quebec and Montreal, and the imposition of special taxes to defray such expenditure, brought up much public agitation. Another bill for the regulation of pilots and shipping, with the creation of a Trinity House, was of great importance. Contested elections; salary of the French translator; Sunday observance; public functionaries who are also members of the assembly; occupied the attention, until one day, without previous notice, the usher of the black rod summoned the members before Sir Robert Milnes, who prorogued the debates. This is the first example of such closing of a session.

“The general opinion of Sir Robert Shore Milnes, as far as one can judge of it at this distance, ranks him as an easy, well-meaning man, with talents scarcely above mediocrity, of no self-confidence whatever, and consequently easily influenced by the irresponsibles about him, to whom he looked for advice. He was not a popular governor.”*

The total of arrivals at Quebec, in 1805, was 146 vessels, burthen, 25,136 tons. “During the summer of 1806, 191 vessels, chiefly square-rigged, measuring, per register, 33,474 tons, from parts beyond sea, entered

*Christie: *History of Lower Canada*, I. 234.

at the custom house, Quebec. Exclusive of these, a great number of coasters were continually employed between Quebec and the Bays of Chaleurs and Gaspé, the coast of Labrador, the King's and other posts within the Gulf and River St. Lawrence. Shipbuilding also, to a considerable extent, was now carried on at Quebec."*

The first timber raft from the Ottawa River, coming out of the Gatineau, was floated down to Quebec by Philemon Wright during the summer of 1806.

Sir Robert Shore Milnes left for England on leave, 8th of August, 1805, and Mr. Thomas Dunn, as president of the council, became administrator, but his government was not satisfactory to some; at least, of his fellow councillors. Chief Justice Alcock, between whom and Milnes a good understanding did not appear to exist, following in this respect the steps of his immediate predecessor, criticized very severely the personal peculiarities of Mr. Dunn, and his want of the qualities necessary for the important position he held.

*Christie: *History of Lower Canada*, I. 251.