CHAPTER XXVII.

New delimitation of the counties, 1829—Defects of the administration exposed by the assembly—Salaries and other appropriations refused—The colonial office—Arrival of Lord Aylmer, 1830—Death of George IV.; ascension of William IV.—Debates in the assembly, 1831—A split in Mr. Papineau's party, 1833—The 92 resolutions, 1834—Lord Gasford and his commission, 1835—Letter from T. F. Elliott, secretary of the commission.

Owing to the disproportion in the popular representation arising from the extension of settlements and increase of population, a new division of the counties from that settled in 1792 had become necessary and in 1829 the following re-adjustment was made:—*

COUNTIES.	SOULS.
Gaspé	3,567
Bonaventure	5,110
Rimouski	7,885
Kamouraska	13,845
L'Islet	13,876
Bellechasse	13,766
Dorchester	12,158
Beauce	9,596
Mégantic	750
Lobinière	7,644
Nicolet	12,593
Yamaska	8,997
Drummond	1,867
Sherbrooke	4,491
Stanstead	8,841
Missisquoi	7,966

**Canadian Archives*, 1899, p. VI.

COUNTIES.	SOULS.
Shefford	3,155
Richelieu	17,953
St. Hyacinth	13,574
Rouville	15,046
Verchères	12,595
Chambly	11,778
Laprairie	22,269
Acadie	8,912
Beauharnois	14,652
Vaudreuil	13,797
Ottawa	2,939
Two Mountains	20,325
Terrebonne	17,800
Lachenaye	12,593
L'Assomption	8,950
Montreal	35,814
Berthier	17,819
St. Maurice	17,179
Champlain	5,996
Portneuf	14,642
Quebec	30,784
Montmorency	3,938
Saguenay	8,366
Orleans	4,078
Total	477,806

Another account says 432,000.

The representation of the Magdalen Islands was included in that of Gaspé; that of the town of Sorel was comprised in the county of Richelieu; that of the town of Three Rivers in the county of St. Maurice.

The scale of representation was fixed at one member for each county containing 1,000 souls, and two members for each county of 4,000 souls. In the case of Mégantic (750 souls), that county was attached to Lotbinière until its population had reached 1,000.

In addition to the county members the cities of Quebec and Montreal were each to have four members, the town of Three Rivers two, the borough of Sorel one.

The representation was thus largely increased, and it was arranged that whilst the eastern townships were to have eight representatives at the next session, these were to be increased to eleven at the next general election.

In the previous year a report stated that, with the exception of Gaspé, not a single county had an English-speaking majority.

To become an elector it was necessary to possess a habitable house, or a lot of land in a city or township, valued at £5 sterling, or to possess a farm in free and common soccage, as a fief, or by rental, to the value of 40 shillings sterling, or over.

Apart from the Canadians, the several religious denominations in the province were as follows:—

Church of England	14,750
Presbyterians and other Scottish churches	5,547
Methodists	2,182
Baptists	589
Other denominations	5,739
	28,807

During the session of 1829, the assembly voted a grant of £12,000 to establish and maintain lights on the east and west ends of Anticosti and Pointe des Monts, as well as a floating light at the Traverse below Quebec. The Island of Anticosti had been annexed to the province in 1826.

From 1808 to 1818 £70,000 had been spent to make roads all over the country, but the money had been lavishly wasted. From 1818 to 1828 £30,000 went in the same manner, without any system and any good result. "The affair was altogether badly conducted," says Mr. John Neilson; "it was full of confusion. I estimate that of the public moneys a sum of £150,000 had been used for various works, and that nothing of all this was permanent. The executive council was in fault for it all."

The executive council—what we now call the ministry—was nothing else than a privy committee responsible to the governor only. They had

the manipulation of the public money; their books were sealed to the public eye. Some parts of the budget were voted by the popular assembly, but the funds were spent by the council without check or control from the people. In fact, it was the reverse of the present state of things. When Mr. Papineau advocated the adoption of a system of control he never went so far as to ask that the ministers be made responsible to the assembly. Such a scheme was "in the air," notwithstanding, both in England and in Canada, but there is no indication that it was ever brought into shape before the national representation and made the subject of an official debate. The evil was apparent, no doubt, since so many complaints existed against it—the remedy was yet to be found.

The refusal to vote the salaries of the chairmen of quarter sessions in Montreal, Three Rivers, Quebec and Gaspé, was because they were appointed by a subordinate functionary holding his commission and receiving his salary at the pleasure of the government and having neither the rank nor that independence which might prevent his fellow subjects from regarding with uneasiness the exercise of a power of this nature over a body of men with whose uprightness and independence the happiness of the people is so intimately connected. Charges of want of qualification were made against the magistrates themselves. Robert Christie, member for Gaspé (the future historian) was said to be the chief cause of this state of things. He petitioned for an open trial, but was refused and expelled from the House, for having by his advice to the governor brought about the dismissal of justices of the peace and other officials, in consequence of their votes and speeches in the assembly. His constituents triumphantly re-elected him, but on presenting himself to take his seat he was again expelled, and it was not until the union of the two provinces that he again sat in Parliament.*

A bill which had been passed (1830) by the assembly providing that no one accepting an office of emolument under the Crown should hold a seat in the representative House, was reported upon by Mr. Ogden, the solicitor-general, as a step further to restrict the influence of the Crown which already possessed too little, he said. The acting governor referred it to the Imperial authorities—evidently to be pigeon-holed.

*See *Canadian Archives*, 1899, p. X.

The House declared that the origin of the abuses to which Lower Canada was subject was to be found in the constitution of 1791, which sanctioned the appointment by the executive power of a legislative House or council composed of members appointed for life, with a view to its forming a constituent branch of the colonial legislature. It was held that the provision was repugnant to the principles of the British constitution, and its execution was fatal to the tranquillity and prosperity of the province. The fatal consequences, it was held, were due to the immunity which was secured to the executive council by this legislative council, in the great abuse of their power.

"The legislative council consisted of sixteen Protestants and seven Catholics—twenty-three in all, twelve of whom held office under the Crown. The executive council had nine members, only one being unconnected with government and all Protestants, with one exception. The colonial office desired Sir James Kempt to ascertain whether it would be expedient to make any alteration in those two councils; how far it would be desirable to introduce a large proportion of members not holding office at the pleasure of the Crown, and, if this was desirable, whether a sufficient number of respectable persons could be found to fill the positions. On this, the governor recommended the gradual increase of the legislative council, and that the judges (except the chief justice) should not be appointed. To gain the confidence of the assembly with regard to the legislative council, he further recommended that one or two of the most distinguished members of that corps should be called to the council, and his reason for this was that it was expedient to remove the suspicion that the legislative council was under the influence of the local government and guided in its proceedings by the will of the governor, which he alleged to be an absolute misrepresentation. Lord Aylmer, who succeeded Sir James Kempt in the autumn of 1830, said that the impression on the public mind was that a sinister influence was continually operating on the governor, he being swayed to a very great degree by the executive council, and although this was not the fact, he thought that the public should be satisfied on that point and agreed with Sir James that Mr. Papineau should be appointed to the council, as his position in it would enable him to prove to the public that nothing went on there that the executive government had an interest in

concealing. Lord Aylmer (1831) said that it was impossible to go further than he did in condemning the public conduct and language of Mr. Papineau, although he esteemed his private character . . . but he wished to show that the administration was free of party connections. He also mentioned Mr. John Neilson along with Mr. Papineau and wrote: 'The introduction of these two gentlemen, enjoying the confidence of the public . . . behind the scenes, would go far towards removing the opinion above alluded to and which I can positively state, as far as regards myself, is wholly without foundation.' ''*

Sir James Kempt reported in the spring of 1830 that the legislative bodies were of such inflammable material that he felt as if seated on a barrel of gunpowder, not knowing how soon an explosion might take place. The assembly, he said, had been very violent on all matters, which he had hoped were buried in oblivion. Their wrath was now directed against the judges and councils. He was trying to act as a mediator and to keep his temper, so that he might not quarrel with either House. If it were determined to give up the Crown revenues to the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, and both Sir John Colborne and he agreed that it should be done, he said pleasantly, trust to the liberality of the legislature, instead of keeping up excitement and eternal discussions on the financial question.

That was the regime (1830-1834) under which Wm. Lyon Mackenzie was expelled four times from the assembly of Upper Canada; the opposition printing office destroyed by order of Sir John Colborne and the editor imprisoned; and Joseph Howe, in Nova Scotia was put in gaol for writing what we now call an ordinary political commentary. By this time the two above named provinces had entered the path followed by the Province of Quebec since 1793 and adopted its programme.

The two councils of the province were by their composition the natural adversaries of the assembly which was not a desirable situation for the country; and what made things still worse, the councils were linked to the colonial office in London, so that, by the means of the councils the colonial office pretended to govern the province, and by the means of the colonial office the councils were sure to be maintained in their place because they

*Dr. Douglas Brymner, *Canadian Archives*, 1899, p. XI.

acted in accordance with the views of the home government. "The colony has, in every crisis of danger and almost every detail of local government, felt the mischief of having its executive authority exercised on the other side of the Atlantic."* On the other side of the ocean was the colonial office—but, what was the colonial office?

Charles Buller's description of Mr. Mother Country is famous: "In some back room . . . you will find all the mother country which really exercises supremacy, and really maintains connection with the vast and widely-scattered colonies of Britain. We know not the name, the history or the functions of the individual, into the narrow limits of whose person we find the mother country shrunk . . . he has a modest home in the outskirts of London, with an equally modest establishment, and the colonist, who is on his road to the office, little imagines that it is the real ruler of the colonies that he sees walking over one of the bridges, or driving his own horse or riding cheek by jowl with him on the top of the short coach, as he comes into town of a morning. There are rooms in the colonial office with old and meagre furniture, book-cases crammed with colonial gazettes and newspapers, tables covered with baize, and some old and faded chairs scattered about, in which those who have personal applications to make are doomed to wait until the interview can be obtained. Here, if perchance you shall some day be forced to tarry, you will find strange, anxious-looking beings, who pace to and fro in a feverish impatience or sit dejected at the table, unable in the agitation of their thoughts to find any occupation to while away their hours, and starting every time that the door opens, in hope that the messenger is come to announce that their turn is arrived. Those are men with colonial grievances. The very messengers know them, their business and its hopelessness, and eye them with pity as they bid them wait their long and habitual period of attendance. No experienced eye can mistake their faces, once expressive of health and energy, now worn by hopes deferred and the littleness of prolonged dependence. One is a recalled governor, boiling over with a sense of mortified pride and frustrated policy; another a judge, recalled for daring to resist the compact of his colony; another a merchant, whose whole property has been destroyed

*Hugh Edward Egerton: *History of British Colonial Policy*, London, 1897, p. 260.

by some job or oversight; another the organ of the remonstrances of some colonial Parliament; another a widow, struggling for some pension, on which her hopes of existence hang; and perhaps another is a man, whose project is under consideration. Every one of these has passed hours in that dull, but anxious, attendance, and knows every nook and corner of this scene of his suffering . . . and, if by chance you should see one of them at last receive the long-desired summons, you will be struck with the nervous reluctance with which he avails himself of the permission. After a short conference you will generally see him return, with disappointment stamped on his brow, and, quitting the office, wend his long way home. Some to despair, or perhaps to return to his colony and rebel. These chambers of woe are called *The Sighing Rooms,* and those who recoil from the sight of human suffering should shun the ill-omened precincts."

"Lord Durham noticed that one reason to account for Canadian maladministration was to be found in the frequent change in the office of the secretary of state, to whom colonial affairs were entrusted. Since Lord Bathurst had retired from that charge in 1827, he observed that there had been no fewer than eight colonial secretaries; and the policy of each one had been marked, more or less, by a difference in method from that of his predecessor."*

"Instead of selecting a governor with an entire confidence in his ability to use his local knowledge of the real state of the colony in a manner which local observation and practical experience best prescribe to him, it has been the policy of the colonial department, not only at the outset to instruct a governor as to general policy which he was to carry into effect, but to direct him by instructions, sometimes very precise, as to the course which he is to pursue in every important particular of his administration."†

"In those days, few British statemen thought it possible to give to colonists the same privileges as those enjoyed in the motherland; and men who, had they been colonists, would have been amongst the leading agitators for reform, were inclined to think that the desire of the Canadians to control the public money showed a want of loyalty."‡

*Rev. Wm. Parr Greswell: *Growth of the British Colonies,* London, 1898, p. 14.
†Lord Durham: *A Report on the State of Canada,* 1839.
‡Emily P. Weaver: *Canadian History,* p. 214.

Lord Dalhousie had left the province on the 8th of September, 1828, when Sir James Kempt assumed the administration. King William IV. began to reign, 26th of June, 1830. Lord Aylmer arrived at Quebec on the 13th October following, to relieve Sir James, who sailed for England a week later. Then, on the 3rd of February, 1831, Lord Aylmer was made governor-general.

Lord Aylmer wrote to Lord Goderich on the 17th January, 1831, that, at first, he entertained the belief that the opposition to the government by the assembly arose from the desire to sever the connection with Great Britain, but he is more and more convinced, on investigation, that Canadians of all descriptions cling with the strongest feeling to their connection with the mother country, and that the Canadians of French origin would be acted on with peculiar force by the idea of a severance, as they dread the predominance of a British population and are hostile to all connection with the United States. He urges the policy of conciliating the good-will of the Canadians by indulging their preference for the laws and institutions of French origin, and he considers this is the more necessary as what is called the English party is constantly proclaiming that it is the settled purpose of Great Britain to do away with these. A good instance of the attachment of the French Canadians to their own laws, he adds, is the fact that in no one instance has a French Canadian availed himself of the permission to change the tenure of his lands from seigniorial to that of free and common soccage.

"During the session of 1831, the governor asked the assembly to vote, during the life of the King, the salaries of the leader of the government, the civil secretary, the provincial secretary, the attorney-general and the solicitor-general. These salaries, with those of the judges, a few pensions, and some other small amounts, formed a civil list of £19,000. This request was discussed in committee of the whole; the committee adjourned without making any report, which was equivalent to a rejection. Never did the House commit such a grave mistake. Already a fatal influence swept it on and beyond the limits of ordinary prudence. A large number of young men had been elected by the people. They brought with them their exaggerated

ideas,* and they served to excite their leaders, who, after the protracted struggle which they had just gone through, stood more in need of being restrained than of being hurried on towards fresh dangers. Messrs. La Fontaine, Morin, de Bleury, Rodier, etc., considered that there were signs of weakening in the midst of this movement. They claimed that all the rights and all the privileges which undoubtedly belong to the inhabitants of the new world, should be obtained, that there was nothing to fear in thus insisting; were not the United States beside us ready to receive us with open arms,† were we to be injured in such a sacred fight? They opposed all compromise, all bargaining. They grouped around Papineau and promised him an unshakeable support.''‡ Mr. Chauveau adds to this that Lord Aylmer's proposals, sanctioned by Lord Goderich, granted about everything that had been demanded.

In August, 1830, a ship load of pauper emigrants was landed at Quebec, sent by the magistrates of the county of Killaloe, for whom no work could be found anywhere and they had to subsist on public charity.

From 1790 to 1815 it is estimated that 5,000 immigrants arrived by sea, and that 2,000 others came by way of Gaspé and New Carlisle. From 1815 to 1830 there arrived at Quebec 168,615 persons of that class, according to the immigration agent, but that figure is considered short of the actual numbers.

During the years 1816-1822, the exports of wheat averaged 195,386 bushels; of barrels of flour, 28,323; and of hundredweight of biscuits, 9,694 annually.

From 1824 to 1830 the export of wheat and flour amounted to:—

1824.....	5,396	nimots	wheat.	41,001	barrels	flour.
1825.....	718,019	"	"	40,003	"	"
1826.....	228,635	"	"	33,671	"	"
1827.....	391,420	"	"	53,839	"	"
1829.....	40,462	"	"	2,859	"	"
1830.....	590,081	"	"	35,836	"	"

*The result of the French Revolution of 1830.

†A great mistake, for our neighbours did not sympathize with the Rebellion of 1837 in the Canadas, at least as a government.

‡Garneau III., 292.

The following table shows the number and tonnage of sea-going vessels built at Quebec:—

1791, 12, tonnage 574; 1801, 24, tonnage, 3,404; 1811, 54, tonnage 13,691; 1821, 22, tonnage, 2,254; 1831, 38, tonnage, 6,170; 1841, 64, tonnage, 23,122; 1851, 66, tonnage, 41,605; 1861, 51, tonnage, 25,546.

In 1831 vessels coming to Montreal continued to report at Quebec. The navigation between Montreal and Quebec was rendered speedy and certain by the employment of tow-boats, but the necessity of entering the vessels at the Quebec custom house caused a delay of one and sometimes of two days in unloading. Additional delay was only avoided by the consignee of the vessel paying the estimated amount of the Crown duties, which were often payable by twenty different consignees and could only be collected after the quarterly returns had been made by the Montreal officers to Quebec. Other complaints were constantly being made on several other points in this connection.

Now, the resistance of the assembly and their obstinancy in forcing all the claims together and accepting no compromise even if only a single item was to be left aside had the effect of exciting the popular element to action. At the general elections of May, 1832, a riot burst out in Montreal, the troops fired and some people were killed. The reform press, English and French, increased the blaze by virulent articles calculated to put the country in a state of revolution.

Another calamity was close at hand. On the 9th of June cholera made its appearance in Quebec—and all know with what terrible result to the whole province. This was coupled with an uncommonly large Irish immigration caused by a general famine in Ireland.

"The political battle continued to be for the right of the assembly alone, to sit and to distribute the taxation. In this, again, the intervention of the Imperial Parliament was pernicious, unconstitutional, contrary to the most fixedly established rights of British subjects, be it at home or in the colonies. All the colonies that had representatives dealt with their entire revenues, by means of votes in their elective chambers; this same right was denied to the Canadians only."*

*L. J. Papineau: Speech delivered before the Institut Canadien de Montréal, the 17th December, 1867.

Mr. Ryland wrote from Beauport to Lord Aylmer, on the 14th of August, 1833: "If the preposterous pretensions of the assembly, to prescribe by an annual bill the terms and conditions on which every servant of the Crown in this province shall be admitted to office were acceded to, few Englishmen would wish for office here, and emigration to this part of the British dominions would be put an end to, till such time as the rapidly increasing population of Upper Canada should pour down upon and overwhelm the French inhabitants of the lower province, and this time it appears to me is not far distant for, by all we hear and read concerning the improvements in that part of His Majesty's dominions, we are justified in believing that its population is augmented by the adoption of a system which produces as great and astonishing effects as those derived from steam in the various uses to which it is applied. I feel confident, therefore, that the policy of the government with respect to the Canadas must shortly be changed, and that their union under one legislature, must soon take place. I cannot, on this occasion, refrain from noticing the deplorable state to which the officers of the government in this province are reduced by the withholding of their salaries for so long a period. . . . I apprehend that the next session of the Provincial Legislature will be as unsatisfactory to Your Lordship as it will be to every man who is influenced by principles of loyalty, and a sincere attachment to the British constitution." To this, Lord Aylmer answered: "I believe there exists no difference of opinion between us on the subject of your letter of the 14th."

It was in 1833 that Papineau separated from Neilson, Cuvillier, Parent, Quesnel and others, or rather that they separated from him, because they did not wish, even while being men of liberal opinions, to launch into a conflict with England. Papineau prepared the 92 resolutions under the form of a list of the grievances of the Canadians, as an instrument to cut away all possibility of conciliation. He passed the Rubicon with drums, fifes, and colours flying.

The famous Ninety-two Resolutions were prepared in the house of Elzéar Bédard, a son of Pierre Bédard, by the members who constituted Papineau's following. It is a bulky document which recites all that had been said against the administration for forty years. After all the items

had been written and corrected one by one, Augustin Norbert Morin was selected to place them in the form of regular resolutions, and, on the 21st February, 1834, Elzéar Bédard introduced them in the assembly. M. Papineau said on that occasion: "It is now a long time we have been complaining, and we all agree as to our wrongs; the difficulty, however, is to remedy them. There are some people who, being full of European constitutions, explain them as they conceive them to us. It is no business of ours to pass judgment upon the institutions of Europe, for we are not in a position to properly judge them. Rather let us consider our own future, and prepare a happy one for our country. There exist to-day positive signs that before long the whole of America will be republican. If it be necessary to change our constitution, should it be done with a view to these forecasting signs? Would it be a crime to ask that it be so? Every member of this House owes his place to the people he represents, and, even were he to be massacred by the soldiery a moment later, he dare not hesitate to pronounce in favour of such a change, if he considers it to be for the good of his country. It is only necessary to learn how we live in America and how others have lived here. England, even England herself, laid on this continent the foundations of a powerful republic, wherein liberty, morality, commerce and the arts all flourished. The Spanish and French colonies, under political institutions less free, were more unfortunate. Is the British system, in the colonies, therefore more aristocratic than democratic? And even in England, itself, is that system purely aristocratic? Mr. Stanley (the colonial minister) commits a grave error in speaking about the monarchical government of England in 1834. Since the time of the Stuarts they who supported the monarchical power lost their heads upon the scaffold. Since that period the British constitution has been a mixed one, and cannot be designated otherwise. And it is this Mr. Stanley, who became a minister in virtue of a vote of the House of Commons, against the wishes of the King, to whom the alternative of accepting him, as a minister, or losing his own Crown, was offered; it is this same man, despised to-day by the people, who talks to us about the monarchical government of England—where the English, themselves, grown so great through their commerce, their institutions, and the progress that they cause civilization to make in all parts of the world, can change that whole government at their will!"

The resolutions repeated the old complaints against the officials, and asked that the legislative council be elected by the people, which would have put them under the power of the electors. In the debate which followed, Papineau and many of his partisans spoke wildly and recklessly, after which the House voted money for local improvements and charitable purposes only, and, at last, the members went home without waiting for the governor to dismiss them.

"After the adoption of the 92 resolutions, Lord Gosford stated in both Houses that he would not dare predict the consequences that would result from the rejection of the proposals of agreement and peace which he had made to this country. This outcome of the situation drove the fumes of excitement as thick as possible into the minds of the people. An address, from seven hundred electors of Quebec, was presented to Mr. Papineau, towards the end of the session, which applauded his course, and pushed him onward in the direction of the inevitable abyss. For some time back the Liberal party of Upper Canada had held more frequent communication with him. The majority of the House in that province even rallied for a moment around Mr. Mackenzie's party, as did Sir Francis Bond Head's executive council."*

Mr. John Arthur Roebuck, in the Imperial Parliament, 15th of April, 1834, moved for a select committee to enquire into the political conditions of the Canadas, adding that these provinces, in consequence of continuous bad government, are in a state approaching to open revolt. The committee reported, 3rd July following, that the matter "may best be left to the mature consideration of the government," which means that the committee had been composed, purposely, of individuals already prepared to stifle (étouffer) the investigation, and this is the more apparent when we read in their report that the administration had taken steps to carry out the suggestions of the enquiry of 1828, whilst we know that nothing was done.

On the 4th of August Mr. Hume presented to the Imperial Parliament Mr. Bédard's ninety-two resolutions, signed by 18,083 people. "Mr. Rice passed censure upon a letter published by Mr. Hume in the press, and in which the latter advised the Canadians to resist the establishment of the

*Garneau, III., 329.

baneful domination of the English government. 'It does not become,' said Mr. Rice, 'a man who speaks under shelter in the House of Commons, to give advice which might inflict such grave injury upon England and upon Canada. If arms are taken up, I hope that the laws will punish all who may have taken part in the conspiracy.' ''*

Lord Aylmer had declared that the people were quiet, and that the members of the assembly were to blame for all the trouble; but soon the whole country was in a blaze of excitement. Committees were formed in all the towns to keep up the agitation and to correspond with the reformers of the other provinces, and the people were urged not to buy British goods. This violence alarmed the more moderate reformers, and the official party still petitioned the King to allow no change to be made.

As might be expected, after having fought for over twenty years to obtain a series of reforms, the greater number of which had been refused him, Papineau set down in that list of grievances the pith of the many questions that had been raised throughout that long debate; and he could count upon the understanding of the masses, for each one of these questions had been discussed, commented upon and brought up repeatedly at the public meetings. The electors were educated upon all these points. If you will that education was slow, but it was as rapid as that of any other people in the world—for it takes time before a new political programme is fully understood by the majority of men.

The general elections took place in the autumn of 1834. There was disturbance in Montreal and elsewhere. In Montreal, on account of the violence manifested, the election contest had to be suspended. At Sorel one man was killed by a gun-shot. The English element, combined with a few Canadians, headed by Mr. Neilson and Mr. Walker, had, at the time, in Quebec, Montreal and Three Rivers, established constitutional associations in opposition to the partisans of the majority in the House. These assemblies sent petitions to the King similar to those which the merchants had already confided to Lord Aylmer, and they instructed Mr. Neilson and Mr. Walker to take them to London. However, there were many Englishmen who participated in the sentiments of the Canadians, and six or seven of

*Garneau, III., 314.

them were elected through the influence of the latter. The eastern townships, which were inhabited by English people, pronounced in favour of the reformers. On their invitation, Mr. Papineau, accompanied by several representatives of the people, went to Stanstead, where the committees, established in that section of the country, received him with all honours. Hundreds of people called upon him the day of his arrival, and the *Vindicator* stated that amongst them were noticed several Americans from the States of New Hampshire and Vermont, amongst others General Fletcher. In the evening he was banquetted by two hundred guests.''*

The first session of 1835 lasted from the 21st February to the 18th March. At the beginning of that period, Lord Aylmer wrote to the minister that he had given eighty positions to the Canadians, who constituted three-fourths of the population, but so great was the partiality before his time, and so deep-rooted were the abuses, that he had to give sixty-two positions to the English element, which only comprised a fourth of that population. As to the salaries and emoluments attached to these sixty-two positions, they were greatly in excess of those belonging to the other eighty. The English officials received £58,000, and the Canadian officials only £13,500. The latter were excluded from the executive department, the Crown lands office, the customs, and the post office departments. The administration of justice was so divided that the English got £28,000 and the Canadians £8,000.

In the spring of 1835, Sir Robert Peel's† new ministry appointed Lord Gosford, Sir Charles Grey and Sir George Gipps as a commission to visit Canada and inquire into the political situation in the colony; the commissioners reached Quebec on the 23rd of August, and Lord Aylmer sailed for England on the 15th of the next month. Lord Gosford invited Mr. L. J. Papineau and M. D. B. Viger to dinner; he visited the classes in the Quebec Seminary; he gave a grand ball on Ste. Catharine's Day, which is an annual feast in the province, and he charmed every one with his politeness.

In September, 1835, the Liberal members of the council and of the assembly met at Three Rivers, at the residence of Mr. René Kimber, to come to an understanding regarding the course to be adopted before the commis-

*Garneau, III., 315.
†Lord Glenelg was Colonial Minister.

sion. The district of Quebec declined to take part in that meeting, so that there were present only the representatives from the districts of Montreal and Three Rivers.

"What I want," said Mr. Papineau, "is a government consisting of men friendly to the laws, to liberty, to justice, of men ready to protect without distinction all citizens, and to grant them all the same privileges. I love, I respect all men, irrespective of race; but I hate those haughty descendants of the conquerors, who come to our country to dispute our political and religious rights. If they cannot amalgamate with us, let them remain in their native island! There is no difference between them and us; and here we are all on a footing of complete equality. . . . They who seek the enjoyment of exclusive privileges, whilst doubtless disapproving of them in the depths of their hearts, will be, themselves, the first victims of such an injustice. Even supposing that they made another Acadia of Canada and that they could expropriate the whole French population, they would soon be divided amongst themselves." Later on he said: "Our efforts were not for the purpose of blasting the commission and its rotten surroundings, rather were they intended to convince our adversaries of the justness of our views in regard to matters of administration. Our struggle was not, therefore, like a revolution raised against the iniquities of governments and seeking to crush them, through a conviction that they could never ameliorate."

The three commissioners were alike in want of political experience, lack of talents and a firm conviction that nothing beneficial could result from their mission. They acted under the fear of the official party. Their presence in the colony was the cause of derision—for they were ostensibly looking for the discovery of a secret which had been ventilated on several occasions before the Imperial authorities and the people of Great Britain. The provincial assembly refused to recognize them, but furnished all the information they wished for and treated them politely.

The secretary of the Gosford commission was T. Frederick Elliott, a nephew of Lord Minto, one of His Majesty's ministers; he did not lose any time before enquiring into the business of the province after his own manner, which was that of a man of sense and a deep observer. The following

letter from him, dated at Quebec, 24th October, 1835, deserves to be read with attention:—

"People have been accustomed in England to hear of only two parties in Canada; the English and the French, but there are in fact three parties, the official, the English and the French, besides some important French classes altogether distinct from the party which goes by that name.

"The official, or as the French term it, Bureaucratic party, is composed of a few old men holding the highest offices. They seem to be fond of privilege, jealous of interference, and ready to hold office at any inquiry into the popular allegations. Most of them are dull, and those who are the reverse are said to be interested. It is of very little consequence what they are. Whatever influence they may have formerly exercised through the instrumentality of weak governors, they are now destitute of any of the real elements of power, having neither connections at home (England) nor weight in the province. If there be a body in the world, which may, without fear, be handled according to its merits, that is the high official party of Canada. In the province itself it is very difficult to say by which great divisions of the people it is detested the most.

"Very different from this feeble corps is the real 'English party.' It is composed of almost all the merchants, with an admixture of considerable landholders, and of some of the younger and more intelligent civil officers. It possesses much wealth and still more credit, and in addition to these it has all that mutual confidence and that precision and unity of purpose, which, to do our countrymen justice, they know better than any other people how to confer on political associations. This imposing body, moreover, has great advantage at the present moment in the moderation of tone which it can assume in contrast with the violence of its adversaries, thus gaining the good-will, if not the overt support, of the numerous portion of society which prefer security and a tranquil life to everything else. Yet I do not like the English party. It is fully as ambitious of dominion as the French party, and in my opinion, prepared to seek it by more unscrupulous means. Whenever either of the two at the present moment speaks of separation, I look upon it as a mere bombast or artifice to bend the course of the government, but, depend upon it, that if ever these hot-heads in Lower Can-

ada should go so far as to hazard the connection with the mother country, the English will be the foremost to cut the tie. They, of the two parties, are by far the best disposed to sympathize with republican institutions. They are the mose rancorous, for they remember the power they have lost, and hate their rivals as a lot of usurpers."

How singularly this letter, written more than seventy years ago, reads, especially when one recalls the memorable utterance of the late Sir E. P. Taché, A.D.C. to the Queen: "The last gun fired on Canadian soil in favour of England will be by a French Canadian."

Mr. Elliott disposes of the opinion prevalent in some quarters to this day, that the insurrection of 1837 was a mere question of race, French *versus* English; whereas, far from being confined to the French element, it had for its most strenuous leaders and organizers, men of quite another race than the French—such as Drs. Wolfred Nelson, Robert Nelson, Scott, Tracy, T. S. Brown, O'Callaghan, Girod, Hindelang, Samuel Newcome, B. Mott and others.

A second letter from Mr. Elliott contains also bits of information, new and curious. After alluding to the opening of the session (27th October, 1835), and to the doubt whether in voting the arrears of the last two years, the assembly would include repayment of the sum of £31,000, advanced to the civil servants out of the military chest, he says: "If Mr. Spring Rice himself had been there he could not have wished to hear more home truths than I delivered on the subjects to two or three French members with whom I dined *en petit comité,* among whom was the editor of *Le Canadien* (Mr. Etienne Parent). It is astonishing how this country has been mismanaged. When I came to know the men whom the military rulers here have been accustomed to regard as little better than traitors and little wiser than children, I am surprised to find (1) on what friendly bases their views generally are founded, and (2) how much superior are their perceptions in political science to those of the men by whom they have been so arrogantly despised."