

LOYALIST ATTITUDES

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SINCE the beginning of the American Revolution, the loyalists have been the cause of much heterogeneous writing. They have been set upon pedestals by admirers, and dragged through the mire by opponents. They have been blamed or praised, maligned or extolled, according to the political views of commentators of their own day and this. Of recent years, like so many objects of veneration or vituperation, they have been subjected to the more discerning methods of scientific history, with eminently satisfactory results. Conscious of these many and diverse contributions, the reader may well respond to the proposal of a few more words on the same theme with repulsion. Yet if he will stay his hand in the act of turning the page, his forbearance will perhaps be rewarded when he learns the limited scope of the present attempt. Here the loyalists will be discussed only as a factor in the development of a small British province.

This study is one of a series prefatory to making an estimate of the strength and direction of loyalist influence in the history of Nova Scotia. The immediate effect of the loyalist migration was to augment the population of Nova Scotia by twenty thousand people. These formed one of the main stocks of population from which the present Nova Scotia has developed. I propose to find out how these loyalists felt towards one another and Nova Scotia, in what spirit they began their life in the province, and how they were received by the pre-loyalist inhabitants. To do it most directly, one must go back to the inception of Loyalty-with-a-capital-L in the colonies from which Nova Scotia drew its share of refugees, must determine its nature and whether it remained constant, or emerged from war, persecution and exile modified or intensified in the individual. That done, the further question arises, how well or ill the vicissitudes of fortune that attended the profession of loyalty served as a preparation for the hardships of pioneer life. It is quite possible that the answer to these questions will not only show the various attitudes of the loyalists at the outset of their life in Nova Scotia, but will provide at least a clue, if not a contribution, to the larger problem of loyalist influence.

Before proceeding with the proposed investigations, let me define the term "loyal". I use it, in this regard, as *the dis-*

tinguishing characteristic of those American colonists who gave up their homes and left their native land to remain British. The first considerable body of loyalists came to Nova Scotia from New England, with Howe's fleet in 1776.¹ An uncertain number of these remained. Thereafter, the majority of loyalists came from the states south of New England. Although it is difficult to give a final analysis, most of the Nova Scotia loyalists seem to have come from the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, a fair number from the Carolinas, fewer from Connecticut and Massachusetts, and a mere sprinkling, except as to negroes, of whom there were two thousand, from the other southern and New England states. It is quite obvious, without detailing a history of loyalism in each of the old thirteen colonies, that the revolution was accompanied and could be accomplished only by a decrease in the number of supporters of the British government. Since it was the work of a small minority, the vast majority of Americans were, in the beginning, passive loyalists. In the words of Van Tyne: "Loyalty was the normal condition, the state that *had* existed, and *did* exist; and it was the Whigs—the Patriots, as they called themselves—who must do the converting."² In the New England colonies, owing to restrictive measures of the British government in 1774, the "converting" was much more rapid than farther south. Throughout the war, despite the organized efforts of the patriot party to bring them into line, most of the middle and southern colonies had at least a large minority of royal adherents; Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and North Carolina had as many royal as patriot sympathizers, Georgia and South Carolina more, while New York was overwhelmingly royalist.³

It is quite clear that at the outset, before any question of independence had been raised, there was no party, except an insignificant ultra-Tory group, that supported the British Government in the passing of the Townshend Acts. Both Whig and Tory upheld the American against the English interpretation of the colonial constitution, and, until the First Continental Congress met in 1774, differed merely in the means proposed to convince the British Government that the American interpretation was the correct one. The acts of that Congress, followed by the Declaration of Independence, brought about a re-shuffling, for many

1. In Stark, J.H. *Loyalists of Massachusetts*, pp. 133-136, is a list of 900 refugees, the original of which, according to Mr. Allen French, of Concord, Mass., had 200 more names.

2. Van Tyne, Claude: *Loyalists in the American Revolution*, p. 2.

3. See G. E. Ellis's article in Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History of America*, Volume 7, pp. 187 ff., footnote by editor; also Van Tyne *Ibid* pp. 93-104, and Flick, A. C.: *Loyalism in New York during the American Revolution*, p. 181.

moderate Whigs would not support armed rebellion, and numbers of people who had previously been indifferent declared themselves against the popular party when it proposed to resort to force. From the time they began to enforce the edicts of the First Congress, the patriot party were on the aggressive. Their great minority made their cause desperate; in organization and continuous activity lay their only hope of success. Thus, on one side were the patriots, a compact, organized party, working through the well-known committees of correspondence, with a platform of reform and a slogan of independence. On the other side was the established Government in a defensive position. Represented in each province by the officials, the loyalist party stood for preserving the historic rights of Englishmen in America, the ground taken by all Americans prior to the First Continental Congress, and contended that this could be done without revolution. Their objective had been and was self-government of the colonies through their own legislatures within the empire. They were a large, diffuse body, "too prone to wait the chastening hand of Great Britain"¹. It was this diffusion, this lack of organization, this dependent attitude, which, combined with the natural conservatism of some, and the hatred of civil war of most, and the fact that much ground had been lost because "prior to July Fourth 1776 most of them honestly believed that there was more justice in the American than in the British programme", made possible such large inroads on their numbers as the patriot party continued to make.² To these factors, and that provided by the failure of the English military commanders to make adequate use of the loyalists, Dr. Flick attributes the slightness of the influence that the loyalists, despite their large number, exerted on the course of the Revolution.

As the war continued and turned in favour of the revolutionaries, their followers increased at the expense of their opponents. Lukewarm loyalists and the indifferent, when subjected to persecution and to systematic confiscation of all civil rights by the patriot party, who held control in all the states except New York, followed the line of least resistance and signed the oath of allegiance to the new nation. Thus it has been estimated that in New York the number of those supporting the King fell from ninety-five to forty-five per cent of the population between 1775 and 1782.³ And, after the fighting ended there was a further weeding out, from which emerges the loyalist proper. It was then that those

1. Van Tyne, *Ibid.*, p. 81.

2. Flick, A. C.: *Loyalists in New York*, p. 220; article in the *New York State Historical Association Journal*, volume 6.

3. Flick: *Loyalism in New York during the Revolution*, p. 180.

who had acquiesced outwardly with the Revolution but had cherished loyalist sympathies, and those who had not taken up arms against the patriot party, were given the opportunity to decide for or against the empire. They were faced with two rather unpleasant alternatives: they could remain among their political enemies, under laws which penalized them to the point of confiscating their credit, suffrage and property, and hope that the revolutionary Government would eventually give them a chance to earn a living, or they could leave their homes and country to join their political friends, the British, and, under government protection and assistance, turn pioneer and hew homes out of the wilderness of one of the remaining British American colonies. It is interesting that in New York forty per cent of the 90,000 individuals who composed the loyalist party in 1783 carried their doctrine to its logical conclusion and left the state.

For those of the party who had been active against the Revolution, there was no such alternative as the foregoing; they could do nothing but leave. For convenience I would divide the loyalists into three general classes. In the first class are those who had made themselves so obnoxious to the opposing party that they had got on the Black List. An analysis of this class shows that they were officials, great landowners and other men of wealth and position, and the remnant that had not migrated to England of the ultra-Tories who had been a party since the early history of the colonies. The members of this class had, generally speaking, refused to sign the Declaration of Independence, and had put their trust in the British Government. Their property had been confiscated¹ and themselves attainted of high treason,² their lives being thereby forfeited.³ Such treatment was not likely to turn these loyalists into patriots; the conclusion of the war found them within the British lines, upholding their cause with increased fervour and bitterness. The second class, consisting of loyalist soldiers, was related to the first both in personnel and in being equally obnoxious to the revolutionaries. The colonies mustered some 50,000 soldiers to assist England in crushing the Revolution.⁴ Among their number were persons of all ranks, professions and trades who, because they fought against the Revolution, alike incurred the penalty of banishment.⁵

1. Flick, *Ibid.* pp. 216 et seq., for list of sales of loyalist property in New York.

2. The Black List for Pennsylvania, in volume 75 of the Duane Pamphlets in the Congressional Library, Washington, is typical of the lists of attainted loyalists.

3. For an analysis of the laws of the different states directed against the loyalists, see Van Tyne, *Ibid.* pp. 327-341, Appendix C.

4. Van Tyne, *Ibid.* p. 183.

5. Regarding their cosmopolitan character, see Coke D. P.: *Notes on the Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists*, edited by H. E. Egerton.

In a third class I would place all the loyalists, exclusive of the two classes already described, who left their respective states. These, although they had suffered intermittent persecution and had been subjected to the usual tests, restrictions and deprivation of rights,¹ had not been sufficiently influential or wealthy to have become marked men. This class, larger than either of the others, was composed of merchants, professional men, clerks, farmers, tenants, tradesmen, mechanics and men of all trades. Farmers, tenants of the great Tory landowners, and hangers-on of wealthy business men were numerous. Traditionally conservative, they had clung to their political habits. They liked the idea of a king and parliament, they were used to it, and they had no political feeling except a complete distrust of the rebel party, which was to them a number of cheering, law-breaking, firebrand, political opportunists. Any government proposed to be carried on by these men, who had been making their lives miserable since 1776, had their unqualified disapproval at the outset. The flower of the third class was undoubtedly the professional men, ministers, teachers, lawyers, doctors and educated traders. To them the burden of restrictions placed on loyalists made exile preferable.² Despite the recommendation of Congress made in fulfilment of the peace treaty, the states refused to legislate for leniency towards loyalists. In nearly all the states they were disfranchised; debts due to them were cancelled; their property was confiscated or taxed until they were ruined. In many localities they were tarred and feathered, and driven out with a warning never to return.³

In anticipation of the time when there would be no British army to stand between them and their persecuting fellow-countrymen, the loyalists towards the close of the war planned an early retreat. From 1776 small detachments of banished loyalists had been making their way to the British provinces. After Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown in 1781, those who had been living within the British lines in New York, or who came in thereafter, made preparations for a great final exodus. The migration of nearly 30,000 to Nova Scotia was accomplished between the last week of April and the twenty-third of November, 1783. The final exodus to Canada, mainly by land, began in the summer and continued much longer. The publication of the first authentic news of the peace treaty was on the twenty-sixth March, 1783.⁴ Less than a month later, the first fleet of transports left New York for Nova

1. see Van Tyne *Ibid.* Appendices A, B, *Analysis of test laws and other anti-loyalist laws*, pp. 318-341.

2. For example: "when a tax of £150,000... was levied in 1785 the Whigs escaped easily;" Flick *Ibid.* p. 164.

3. Van Tyne, *Ibid.*, p. 295.

4. Van Tyne quotes Rivington's Gazette of this date.

Scotia. Among the more prosperous loyalists, associations had been formed and agents sent to spy out the promised land. A typical society of this kind was that of the Port Roseway Associates. Consisting of about three hundred members, "chiefly of the number of those-who-for their Attachment to Government and after Numberless fatigues in supporting the Royal Cause—have been obliged to quit all and take refuge within the King's lines", they met first in November of 1782, and, in consequence of the encouragement given by the Commander-in-Chief and the Governor of Nova Scotia, "together with the Proclamations relative to the settlement of that Province", they associated with the purpose of removing to Port Roseway.¹ They sent agents to secure them good land, to ask for special consideration as well as the privileges granted to all loyalists, to find what articles the associates should take with them, and to report generally on the province as a prospective place for settlement.² The agents made the requisite enquiries and reported to the Associates, who sailed in the first fleet to take up their lands in Nova Scotia. All loyalists who had lived in the British lines for a full year were to be transported at the Government's expense,³ but the more wealthy associations chartered ships of their own.⁴ By the winter of 1783-4, twenty thousand loyalists had arrived in the peninsula of Nova Scotia.

The loyalists who settled in Nova Scotia included types of each of the three classes already described. Of the five thousand families who remained in the province, those of the first class were comparatively few. They consisted of men like General John Ruggles, Reverend Charles Inglis, Major Philip van Cortland, Stephen and James Delancey, Attorney-Gen'l Blowers and others, distinguished in themselves or of prominent families, or both. The proportions of the second and third classes, that is of loyalist soldiers and civilians, were 2,000 and 3,000 respectively. Since the number of members in the civilian family averaged between four and five, often being nine or even twelve, while that of the private soldier was between one and two, the actual number of individuals in the civilian families exceeded by 10,000 the soldier families. Exclusive of these, some 2,000 loyal negroes, most of whom had earned their freedom by fighting for the King, settled in Nova Scotia. These numbers include only those loyalists who received and retained grants of land. Between two and three thousand

1. See Port Roseway Associates Minute-Book, p. 27, Public Archives of Canada, Phillipps Manuscript no. 22186.

2. See Port Roseway Associates Minute Book pp. 35-40, Letter of Instructions to their Agents, showing how much they hoped for from Government.

3. Van Tyne, *Ibid.*, p. 292

4. Flick, *Ibid.* p. 173.

came and went away again after a two or three years' attempt to settle. Altogether about 18,400 white and 2,000 coloured loyalists were added to the peninsular population of Nova Scotia by the loyalist migration.¹

At the outset of their life in Nova Scotia all grades, ranks and colours of loyalists had a common characteristic, adherence to a political ideal, and had undergone a common experience, persecution. How far these constituted a tie in the face of social differences, it is difficult to ascertain. It is possible that persecution, the privations of the war, and the hardships they experienced before they took up the threads of life in Nova Scotia had a more intense immediate but less permanent effect than the loyalty of which they grew prouder as the years rolled by. The restraint of war-time had been removed, and the immediate prospect of living, not only under the sort of Government they trusted, but as the particular objects of that Government's concern, was not unpleasing. Despite minor squabbles and one quarrel which led to a split among the loyalists,² the general attitude was one of helpful *camaraderie*. Within the ranks of the first and second classes there were strong ties. Those of the first had suffered persecution since the beginning of the Revolution; many of them were related; they had all lost much for their Tory principles, and had a corresponding amount to hope for from Government. They had therefore a great deal in common, and tended to stand by one another.³ This family feeling was matched, among the soldiers, by a strong *esprit de corps*, born of the comradeship of the camp and the patriotic nature of their cause. In this case the fellow-feeling of one fighter for another was strengthened by a common dislike for their ally, the English regular soldier. Thus the experiences which the old loyalist and soldier classes had endured intensified their feelings, and in them the attitudes and characteristics that distinguished the loyalists as a whole became marked and sometimes exaggerated to the point of distortion. In this fashion one sees, for example, the general loyalist characteristic of dislike of republicanism hardened, in John Wentworth, into a fear of it which made him con-

1. In a previous study I compiled a table showing the dispersion of the loyalists in Nova Scotia. See Report for 1934 of the Canadian Historical Association, p. 108. This table places the soldier and civilian, white and negro, grantees and their families in the nine counties into which the province was then divided.

2. Between the "55 gentlemen", of the first class of loyalists, and the signers of the counter-petition. In the Public Archives of Nova Scotia (hereafter referred to as P. A. N. S.) Volume 369, document 22 is their petition, and the counter-petition of over 600 less influential loyalists is in the Archives in the original. Pamphlets No. 671 and 672 in the Public Archives of Canada indicate the nature and extent of the controversy that raged over it in both North America and England.

3. e.g. John Wentworth, last royal Governor of New Hampshire and Governor of Nova Scotia, 1792-1808, seems to have known all the prominent loyalists, and was continually recommending persons for government appointments on the grounds of their "loyalty".

tinually impute the worst motives to such non-loyalists as Cottnam Tonge, popular orator and Assembly member, who was certainly not guilty of them¹.

The attitude most generally exhibited by loyalists was probably that of exclusiveness. They felt, and they had been encouraged to feel, that their profession of loyalty, and their adherence to it throughout the sufferings such a faith entailed, placed them in a class by themselves, above their fellow-men. Just as it had singled them out for persecution while they had been among revolutionists, it should, now that they had reached the British fold, entitle them to distinction. In the face of many temptations to go over to the other side, they had kept the faith and done their duty. To quote their own words: "Thus continually called upon by His Majesty, his Commissioners and Generals", the loyalists

took a decided part in the cause of their fellow-subjects in Great Britain. In direct consequence of this virtuous and meritorious conduct, their persons have been attainted, their estates confiscated, sold and appropriated to the use of the rebel usurpation, and many of them, possessed of affluence and a degree of happiness surpassed by that of no people in any country upon earth, have devoted the whole of their fortunes and their felicity to a religious observance of the conditions and duties of Society, and to the *national safety*.²

This feeling that they were a Chosen People did not die with the first generation of loyalists. It came about as Governor Haldimand foretold in 1782: "It may be presumed that the people having suffered so much persecution for their attachment to the Government will transmit the same to their posterity"³. Thus, to be able to attach the initials "U.E." to one's name, signifying descent from one of the original supporters of a united empire, is to this day considered a very real distinction in parts of Canada.

It is significant that what has become a matter of sentiment or family pride had originally little of the sentimental element, but much more "cash value". As in the pamphlet quoted above, when loyalism was stressed, the burden of the theme was usually a request for compensation or special consideration of one kind or another. Lest this disposition appear as a selfish desire to recoup their losses at others' expense, it will be well to let the loyalists speak for themselves. The following paragraph, written when

1. See Calendar of Papers 1802-1815 in P. A. N. S., many letters from Wentworth to the Secretaries of State between 1802 and 1808, see also Murdoch: *History of Nova Scotia*, Vol. 3 pp. 223, 248 ff.

2. Pamphlet no. 637: *The Case and Claim of the American Loyalists*, p. 15, and No. 695, James Galloway's pamphlet of the same tenor, in Canadian Archives.

3. P. A. N. S. Volume 367 doc. 25 Haldimand to Townshend, 25 Oct., 1782.

the provisional treaty had just been signed, expresses adequately their notion of their part in the war, and at once explains and justifies their plea for compensation:

That the American Loyalists have ever considered the Prosperity and Interest of Great Britain as inseparably connected with their own, and cannot object to any Measures which may procure Benefit to the Mother Country, or avert any Calamity which may threaten Her; but if acknowledgement of American Independence be the necessary price of Peace, and conducive to the Welfare of this Country, it would be a singular hardship indeed that the National Benefit should be purchased at their Expence. They could not wish the war prolonged. But since your Petitioners conceive it to be of the Essence of every political Society, that, as each Member is bound to contribute to the Welfare, so He is intitled to the protection of the State; and that mutual Rights and Obligations, and a participation of public Losses and Benefits must infallibly result from the Union—And as the protection of every part of the Empire may, by the Events of War, become impossible, they conceive that the Sacrifice of a particular part, in consequence of the inability of the State to retain it, ought, by the eternal Principles of natural Justice and the fundamental Laws of the British Government, to be borne by the whole Society.¹

On the assumption that their homes had been the price of peace for the empire, they asked for compensation for their material losses.²

Out of this rational theory grew a tendency to capitalize their loyalty, for which the British Government and the exigencies of war were largely responsible. Beginning with the King's Proclamation of 1775, urging his subjects to withstand rebellion, the Government had issued continuous propaganda soliciting supporters, encouraging active help from its adherents, and always linking rewards with loyalty.³ When, for example, the English Commissioners came to treat for peace in 1778, they drew an official comparison of the offers made by the King with those by the revolutionaries, and forbade the loyalists, in the name of loyalism, to accept restitution of property on the terms of reconciliation offered by Congress. Pointing out the improbability of the Revolution being successful, and emphasizing the protection offered by the British, they spurred on the American Tories "to vie with each other *in eager and cordial endeavours* to secure their own

1. See Shelburne Manuscripts in Public Archives of Canada, volume 67: Petition intended to be presented to Parliament by the late American Governors in Behalf of the American Loyalists 8 Feb., 1783, and articles in the Shelburne *Royal American Gazette*, copies of 30 May and 13 Jun., 1785. In P. A. N. S.

2. See Pamphlet no. 695 in Public Archives of Canada: Claim of the American Loyalists Reviewed, by Joseph Galloway, 1788, p. 16.

3. There were two proclamations in 1775 and three in 1776 to this effect.

peace and to promote and establish the prosperity of their country" by making more strenuous efforts against the revolutionaries.¹ To a declaration issued in 1780 by the Board of Directors of loyalists associated "for embodying and employing such of his faithful subjects in North America as may be willing to associate under their Direction, for the Purpose of annoying the Sea Coasts of the revolted Provinces and distressing their Trade"² is attached a list of "Benefits and Rewards" for those who would join.

The effect of British propaganda and promises was to foster not only an expectation of compensation but a dependence on the British Government for protection, guidance, and even the necessities of life. This dependent attitude of the loyalists recurs constantly in their letters, memorials and pamphlets. Its inevitability is clearly shown by the following excerpt from a statement of the loyalist position:

The Distresses of the Loyalists were greatly alleviated and their hopes of Protection continually kept alive by a series of Acts . . . as well as by the most solemn Assurances of His Majesty's confidential Servants, that they might, in all Events, depend upon His Majesty's support and paternal Regard for their Protection. That these Royal and National assurances were continued down to a very late period, and though they produced still more vigorous proceedings against the Loyalists, stimulated them in their Exertions in support of Government, and confirmed them in their Reliance on the Truth and Justice of the British Nation.³

In the dilemma in which the loyalist found himself, his only hope against being abandoned to "the rage of their Enemies" or to . . . "the calamity of extreme poverty"⁴ lay in the fulfilment by the British Government of its promises.

The loyalists' tendency to turn to the British Government for the solution of all their various problems was not deflected by the political lesson they learned from the Revolution. The experiences they underwent, in the course of persecution and a war conducted against themselves by a republican Government, had converted their preconceived dislike of republicanism into a horror of it⁵. As compared with the Government of the United States, that of Great Britain was as solid as the rock of Gibraltar; to their revolution-weary sensibilities no qualities in government seemed

1. See Pamphlets, No. 637, p. 15.

2. Shelburne Manuscripts, Volume 67, p. 113. Enclosure, 12 Feb., 1783.

3. Shelburne Manuscripts, Vol. 67, p. 184. Governors' Petition.

4. Shelburne Manuscripts, Vol. 67, p. 156, Anonymous to Shelburne, 11 Dec., 1782.

5. The Anti-American bias of the loyalist is well known and to be expected. See Colonial Office papers in the Public Record Office, London, series 217, volume 60, Parr to Nepean, 5 May, 1788, for one example of an excess of anti-American zeal in a loyalist official.

so attractive as the rock-like ones of stability and security.¹ For the moment, at least, their ideal in government was the Elizabethan *semper eadem*. Hence, one might conjecture in the loyalists a conservative, possibly even a reactionary attitude towards political change. To what degree this disposition was evinced will be the subject of a later study. For the present it must be borne in mind that all these "attitudes" and tendencies varied with the individual and the case in point, and that, as a rule, they emerged most strongly in the ultra-loyalists of the first class, less in the soldiers, and least of all in the common or garden loyalist of the third class. They are not to be construed as inherent qualities of character, but merely as effects of the forces that had played upon the supporters of British government in America since 1774.

In view of the similarity of their political professions, and of their common interest in the progress of Nova Scotia, the loyalist and pre-revolutionary inhabitants of the province might well have been expected to regard each other with a friendly eye. When the provincial Government in 1774 rejected the invitation of Congress to join the thirteen colonies in revolt, Nova Scotia became an officially "loyal" province. When the legislature petitioned the Government for the redress of grievances the next year, it adopted the constitutional means of reform.² These acts were quite in keeping with the loyalist platform to preserve "the historic rights of Englishmen in America," and thus assure "the unity of the empire, security and peaceable progress."³ Both loyalists and old inhabitants were thus, by their own declarations, British constitutionalists. Moreover, they had a common bond in their choice of Nova Scotia as their future home and a common interest in her progress. But the manner of their choosing shows the divergence of the loyalist and pre-loyalist points of view. The old inhabitants were pioneers who had preferred Nova Scotia to New England. They went to Nova Scotia to better themselves. The loyalists would have preferred, had the circumstances been different, to remain in their own homes. Nova Scotia was the less of two evils to them. The old inhabitants came as to a Land of Promise, full of hope and energy and confidence in themselves and the province. The loyalists came to a land of exile, with superb courage, but casting many a regretful look backward.

1. The glorious British constitution and the anarchistic state of the American government are so frequently mentioned by loyalists that complete references would be impossible, if they were not superfluous. Sentiments like "The Imbecility of the American states forms the only Basis of their Union", and references to "the imperfect, crude, and ill-digested forms of their government" are too many to enumerate.

2. Brebner, J. B.: *Nova Scotia's remedy for the American Revolution*; ed., Canadian Historical Review, June, 1934, pp. 174 ff.

3. Flick: Article in the New York State Historical Ass'n Journal, p. 218.

Besides cherishing a natural desire to return to the homes that were forbidden them, the loyalists had little reason to expect congenial relations with the inhabitants of Nova Scotia. Many had, of course, heard so little about the province and its inhabitants that they had no pre-conceived notions. But in English official circles the quality of loyalty behind the Nova Scotian official declarations was seriously questioned. For example, Carleton wrote in 1783: "It is certain that...too many...among the old inhabitants are far from being well-affected to the King's Government"¹; and again, when the presbytery of Halifax applied to Dr. Witherspoon, a notorious republican, for a religious instructor, he wrote: "After the opinions that have *already been entertained* of some persons in your province, this conduct makes a very unfavourable impression of their loyalty"². Carleton was in charge of the embarkation of loyalists in New York, and it would indeed be strange if the impression of Nova Scotians which prevailed among the officials there had not been conveyed to the loyalists, who constantly surrounded them.

Even the new settler who had not been subjected to prejudice against the old inhabitants was not likely to find in them an enthusiasm for loyalism like his own. Although many had been threatened and some ruined by American privateers, the old inhabitants had not suffered in the past eight years as the loyalists had. They had not been driven from their homes, tarred and feathered, imprisoned and finally harried out of the land. They had not, generally speaking, fought for their faith. Nor had they been worked up to a fervour of patriotic emotion by war and persecution, as had the loyalists. To the latter, consumed with ardour for their cause, the more casual patriotism of the old settlers seemed like indifference, or worse.³ An early report from the loyalists asserted that men of republican leanings were influential and in many important positions in Nova Scotia, and pointed out the threat that this was to the loyalists who "apprehend fresh disturbances may arise therefrom, and that the same persecuting spirit which has driven them into the woods of Nova Scotia will not suffer them to remain even there in peace and tranquillity"⁴. Thus an element of mistrust entered into the attitude of loyalist toward pre-loyalist. That attitude was in general one of superi-

1. Colonial Office series 5, volume 111, p. 287, Carleton's letter to North of Oct., 1783 (Public Record Office, London).

2. Colonial Office series 5, Vol. 111, Carleton's letter to Parr, 23 Oct., 1783.

3. There are instances of like suspicions among the loyalists themselves. Van Tyne, p. 263, says "The consistent Loyalists were jealous that 'they, who had borne the burden and heat of the day, should get no better reward than those who came within the British lines to avoid the evils outside.'"

4. Colonial Office series 5 vol. 111, Carleton to Fox, 5th Sept., 1783.

ority, a product of the loyalist exclusiveness already accounted for, tinged with suspicion. The suspicion varied with the individual and interest concerned, from nil to a considerable percentage. Such an attitude was hardly likely to endear the loyalists to the pioneer Nova Scotians.

Hitherto the forces which moulded American colonists into loyalists have been considered in their general effect. How they reacted with qualities of individual character is a different matter. That danger can bring forth courage, sufferings fortitude, and privation cheerful acceptance, no one who has read the annals of the loyalists will deny. They consistently showed these qualities under hardships of every kind. But, once the long-continued strain was relaxed, reaction was inevitable. From the "settling" period, from 1783 and 1788 in Nova Scotia, many a loyalist idol emerged with feet of clay. When a man like Governor Parr, who had no "partiality", being as he said, "equally unknown and unconnected upon the whole Continent of America",¹ could refer to the loyalists as a "cursed set of dogs",² and frequently voice such sentiments as, "they fret and vex me, I am a fool for my pains, it all proceeds from my anxiety for the welfare of the Province, which they do not care a damn about",³ it gives one food for thought. Though we grant that pressure of time and events accounts for a certain warmth of expression, the Governor's estimate of the loyalists conflicts strangely with the usual picture of them. When one finds his statements amply and independently corroborated, often by the loyalists themselves, the most willing worshipper is forced to dethrone his gods. Considered as heroes, their conduct makes them petty and ridiculous; looked at from the common level, it shows them merely to have been human.

Regarding the 18,000 loyalists as individuals with the usual human tendencies, one should not be surprised that the effect of the vicissitudes they had gone through between 1775 and 1783 was not wholly uplifting. If privation taught them endurance, it did not make them less prone to recoup their losses when the opportunity offered. It is quite clear that as they had thought the world well lost for loyalism, so they had no objection to regaining it by the same means. Parr said, "The Loyalists in general rate their pretensions much above their intrinsic value,"⁴ and the demands made by one band of loyalist associates, to cite one of many examples,

1. Report of Canadian Archives for 1921, Appendix E p. 6, Copy of Parr's letter to Shelburne 1 May, 1784.

2. Colonial Office series 217 vol. 60, Parr to Nepean, 13 July, 1788. (Public Record Office, London).

3. Parr to Nepean, 13 July, 1788.

4. Parr to Shelburne, 13 Aug., 1784. (Canadian Archives Report 1921, p. 6).

substantiates his remark. After instructing their agents to obtain promises of extensive land grants on the most privileged terms, of supplies of all kinds and even of workmen to help them with their settling, they required "That assurance be given by Government that their settling at this Place shall no ways injure the claims and demands for former losses and sufferings—or be estimated as a compensation thereof".¹ Some of the most prominent² had as many as four grants of land. They expected to be given jobs, even at the expense of the pre-loyalist office-holders, and deluged the Governor and the Secretaries of State with their applications and demands.³

It would have been impossible, under the circumstances, for anyone to satisfy even the reasonable demands of such a large number of people. When we remember that until the division of the province, which became effective in the autumn of 1784 eighteen months after the first Spring fleet arrived, Parr had over 30,000 persons to settle, that the quickest means of communication was by sailing vessel, and that he had been in the province only since October 1782 himself, his task appears gargantuan. One begins to understand how importunate and selfish the loyalists seemed to the harassed man, but one also finds excuse for their importunity. The only means of action for the loyalist who was not receiving his due, and was cut off from the seat of government by forest or water, was in persistent application and renewed protest.⁴ The loyalists had been led to expect much from the British Government. They conceived themselves to be settling as a privileged people in Nova Scotia, where they would establish forever the principles for which they had suffered persecution and exile. When they found they could not even obtain the titles to the land on which they were settled, discontent was rife.

The current feeling was evinced in many ways; quarrels over proportions of land and provisions, and complaints against Parr and the executive officials were the order of the day. The loyalists on the Saint John River even petitioned to have the continental part of the province separated from the seat of government.⁵ After the Imperial Government had decided to make this change, Parr's burden was lightened. He was thereafter better able to satisfy

1. Philipps manuscript, No. 22186 p. 39 Letter of Instruction to Agents, 21 Dec., 1782.

2. e.g. Isaac Wilkins, the Bartons, the Hills, see Index of Land Papers, P.A.N.S.

3. Parr wrote to Nepean in 1788 (See Colonial Office series 217 vol. 60): "It is not an easy matter to manage an expecting Loyalist; their present want is every office in this government." And the miscellaneous papers in this series for the years 1782—1790 include an enormous number of petitions to the Secretary of State asking for petitions and favours.

4. In the Surveyor-General's letter-book, pp. 27, 41 (Volume 394 in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia) are typical protests and complaints.

5. For the connection between the loyalist petitions and government policy in dividing the province, see Miss Gilroy's article *The Partition of Nova Scotia* in the *Canadian Historical Review* for December, 1933.

the demands of the loyalists settled in the peninsula, and the storm subsided. But not before there had been a general stirring up of the province, which had repercussions in the sessions of the legislature which followed the elections of 1785.¹ That the discontent was encouraged to exceed its normal proportions by a relatively small number of agitators is clear, and again what one would expect. It is largely to a minority, ambitious for power and place and heedless of the rights of others, that the bad opinion of the loyalists expressed by Parr and others was due. On the whole, as the Governor himself said, they were not pre-eminently bad²—nor were they pre-eminently good—they were just human.

To these attitudes, the response of the people who were already settled in Nova Scotia when the loyalists arrived was varied. At first they were indifferent; the official circle, with the notable exception of the Attorney-General,³ friendly and helpful.⁴ But as distinctions and privileges came the way of the newcomers, indifference gave place to uneasiness, which, when it became clear that the loyalists looked on Nova Scotia as their special preserve, turned into alarm. Loyalist exclusiveness evoked pre-loyalist resentment. A paragraph from the letter of an old inhabitant who had suffered in the war is significant:

Instead of our being stripped of our Rights to make amends for losses of the Loyalists who was plundered in New York or elsewhere, we have at least as weighty reasons as they possibly can offer to claim restitution from Gov't for the value of all the property taken from us, our distresses from Imprisonment, etc. They had a numerous British army to protect them, we had to combat the sons of darkness alone; In a word we had much less than they to hope for by unshaken loyalty, and incomparably more to fear.⁵

The loyalists learned that, while it had advantages, being in a favoured class was not unalloyed joy. Thenceforth, whenever loyalist dislike or suspicion showed itself against the old inhabitants, it was heartily reciprocated. Both old and new were ready to find fault with each other. The phase of settling was passing into that of assimilation, and these were the growing pains of the new society.

1. I hope to discuss these in a later paper.

2. Canadian Archives Report for 1921, Appendix E. p. 6, Parr to Shelburne, 1 May, 1784 and again p. 8, Same to same, 13 Aug., 1784.

3. Richard Gibbons, who refused to place his fiat on the loyalists' grants for half the usual fee, when he was ordered to do so, and was in 1784 removed to Cape Breton Island as Chief Justice.

4. As shown in the activities of the Surveyor-General, see his letter-book, Volume 394, pp. 39, 43, 46, 102 (Public Archives of Nova Scotia).

5. Volume 1 of the New Brunswick Historical Society publications, p. 185, letter from Simonds to Hazen and White, 28 Feb., 1784.