

authority only—not parliamentary, the Anglo-American colonists were known to be arming and inviting foreign interference to defend their own constitutional rights—were even making overtures to the Canadians.

Before deciding to throw off the English usurpation, the Canadian Seigneurs and noblesse in Dec., 1773, held an assembly, or States General, at Montreal and demanded of the British government the immediate recognition of the constitution of the country as guaranteed. Neither the common people nor the clergy took part in this assembly or demand. (Garneau. The Whig or Liberal party to which the noblesse were obliged to address themselves in England was that which was most hostile to everything French in Canada." (Garneau, Hist. du Canada, vol. II, p. 422.) In their demand they promised the utmost loyalty to the Crown and re-ventilated their right to participate in the military and civil government of the country, according to the constitution. (Garneau.)

The Tory party of Great Britain rallied to the support of the Canadian noblesse and a hearing was arranged for them on the floor of the British Parliament at London. They were represented before this parliament by the Seigneur Chartier de Lotbinière. And the subsequent act of 1774 was arranged under his advice. In the debate on the (Sovereign) Council which was to be re-instituted in Canada, Lotbinière was questioned and replied that (as formerly) the noblesse were admitted. (Kingsford's Hist. of Canada, vol. V, p. 228.) The Whig or Liberal party fought any recognition to the French, declaring that "the great mass of the common French liked the English law, since it freed them from the presence of their superiors." (Kingsford.) Under this plea, ever since the Liberals have sought to create an antagonism in Canada against the noblesse, so as to use the lower classes to overthrow the constitution and destroy the institutions of the country to the benefit of commercial exploiters who approach the Liberals as the more purchasable and corrupt party of English politicians.

Act of Quebec of 1774 relating to a confirmation of the constitution of Canada, passed at the demand of the Canadian noblesse:—

III.

"Provided always and be it enacted, that nothing in this Act shall be con-

strued to extend, make void or alter any right, title or possession, derived under any grant, conveyance or otherwise of or to any lands within the said province or the provinces thereto adjoining, but the same shall remain and be in force and be in force and have effect as if this Act had never been made."

IV.

"And whereas the provisions made by the said proclamation (of the Parliament and King of England of 7 Oct., 1763), in respect to the civil government of said province of Quebec, and the powers and authorities given to the governor and other civil officers of said province by the grants and commissions issued in consequence thereof (unconstitutionally by parliament and contrary to the treaty) have been found by experience inapplicable to the state and circumstance of said province. The inhabitants . . . professing the religion of the Church of Rome and enjoying an established form of constitution and system of laws, by which their persons and property have been protected, governed and ordered for a long series of years from the first establishment of the said provinces of Canada,—be it therefore enacted that the said Proclamation (of 7 Oct. 1763) and the commissions and grants of authority found unconstitutional and contrary to the customs of the province established by the King of France and the treaty of 1763 and the affirmation of this act) . . . are hereby revoked, annulled and made void after the first day of May, 1775."

VIII.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid that all His Majesty's Canadian subjects within the Province of Quebec (religious orders and communities only excepted) may hold and enjoy also their property and possessions, together with all customs and usages relative thereto, and all other their civil rights in as large, ample and beneficial a manner as if the said proclamation, ordinances and commissions had not been made, and as may consist with (1) their allegiance to His Majesty, and (2) to the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain. And that, in all matters of controversy, relative to property and civil rights, resort shall be had to the laws of Canada as the rule for the decision of the same. And all causes that shall hereafter be instituted in any of the courts of justice to be appointed within and for the said province