

Mr. Garneau's words certainly convey to a certain extent a truthful representation of the state of the country and the forms of government successively established before 1791. But it can, on the other hand, be safely asserted that, under the most oppressive of all the three different governments, the French-Canadian portion of the community enjoyed much more real liberty than they ever had under the rule of France. To begin with, *lettres de cachet*, that most crying abuse of French tyranny, were never heard of from the day the Union Jack was run up on the citadel flag-staff. Before that, the Governor was always provided with a certain number of these pleasant little missives, invented by *le Grand Monarque*. They were all duly signed by the King, the name of the person to be committed and the date only being left in blank, and could be, and were, by the Governor used at his good-will and pleasure. Moreover, the Conquest abolished the hateful rule of the Intendant, which had proved productive of so much misery and desolation under the grasping and dishonest Bigot. It must also be remembered that the monopolies which marked the sway of France disappeared with British rule, and such considerable progress followed the opening up of trade and the impetus given it by British energy and British industry that, during the twenty-six years of tyranny complained of by M. Garneau, Canada made greater strides towards prosperity and wealth than during the preceding century and a half. It is fair that some allowance should be made for the not unnatural prejudices of every writer, but from a usually not inaccurate historian, a greater amount of honesty and truthfulness might not unreasonably have been looked for.

Of the Act we are examining, Alison says :—

“A rebellion, or possibly a separation from the parent State, was inevitably bequeathed to Canada by the con-

stitution of 1791.” The censure is strong, but it must be admitted that the measure was very ill-considered. All its defects were pointed out strongly and fully to the House and Government by Mr. Adam Lymburner, who, with great ability, at the bar of the House, pleaded the cause of the resident English, and with prophetic voice proclaimed the future evils likely to arise from the course about to be adopted. Pitt, however, was then at the helm of the State, and had made up his mind with dogged obstinacy to the passing of the bill. Moreover, the times were full of anxiety and trouble, and the great statesman had too many more important subjects to attend to, touching matters nearer home, to be able to devote much time or care to the management of a distant and at that time not very important colony. The interests of the United Empire Loyalists were what the Government naturally looked to most, and it was thought their happiness and prosperity would be best secured by separating them from the French element. There may have been some reason in the argument; but it would certainly not have been unreasonable to have expected some thought to have been given to the comfort and security of the British in Lower Canada also. Perhaps, furthermore, Lord Dorchester, the brilliant originator of the Quebec Act of 1774, had got the ear of the Ministry, and as usual sought to the utmost of his power to favor the French at the expense of his fellow-countrymen. That he certainly took an interest in the matter is made clear by the fact that he was chosen to inaugurate the constitution in Canada, and returned thither for the third time as governor in 1793. He remained in Canada only three years and then obtained leave of absence, but never resumed his duties. In truth, though only in his seventieth year, his mind had given such unmistakable signs of premature decay, that it had become