

of Government, and praying in the name of all the inhabitants and citizens of the province, to have the French institutes in their stead and a total abolition of trials by jury, together with a capacity of holding places of honor and trust in common with His Majesty's ancient (British) subjects; we crave leave to inform your honorable House, that the said petition was never imparted to the inhabitants in general, that is, the freeholders, merchants and traders, who are equally alarmed with us at the Canadian laws being to take place, but was in a secret manner carried about, and signed by a few of the seigneurs, chevaliers, advocates, and others in their confidence at the suggestions and under the influence of the priests."

To this petition one hundred and eighty-four representative names by committees from all over the country were appended including many French; and it was stated it would have received a much larger French acquiescence by signatures were it not that the act had been obtained by their priests with whom they did not wish to be on ill terms or offend.

In England likewise the bill was very hotly denounced after it had passed, and innumerable pamphlets with inflammatory titles and cartoons, the popular mode of expression of the day, were issued. But all to no avail; the bill had become law, and was not to be altered by petitions, remonstrances or public denunciation.

That the civil disabilities of the people arising from their religion only, should be removed, does credit to Carleton and Edmund Burke (the latter, in all other particulars, strongly opposed the bill) with which liberality and justice none will disagree. The French inhabitants had taken the oath of fidelity to the Crown and were fully entitled to all the privileges of British subjects. The pages of Canadian history have been too much darkened by religious dissensions and disabilities, and are so to-day, for the prosperity and welfare of the country. It is a relic of barbarism, of that re-