

The struggle for the supremacy of the continent was succeeded by a struggle for acquisition. In this strife the new-born nation of the United States—itsself the outcome of these years of contention—has in the first century of its existence taken a leading part. What is known as the Quebec Bill, passed by Parliament on the cession of New France, recognizing the Roman hierarchy in Canada and securing to the Jesuits their vast possessions and privileges, and consequently their power, was among the grievances of the Americans at the opening of the war of the Revolution. It was by this measure that Canada was saved to England when the thirteen colonies were lost. But the United States, foiled in its efforts to make the northern portion of the continent American, began at once the effort for the acquisition of Florida, Louisiana^{§§} and the middle West by diplomacy and purchase. The presence of Latin peoples and the Roman faith on this continent was deemed by our fathers incompatible with their own civilization, their institutions, their freedom, their faith. As new territory was acquired, there was a united effort on the part of the clergy and members of our own communion, in common with our fellow-citizens of other religious beliefs, to take possession of this illu-

^{§§} In French Louisiana, Parkman tells us that "freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, of trade, of faction, were alike denied" (i. 305). It was equally so in Spanish Florida.