

GRANTS TO REGULARS AND MILITIAMEN.

We have already seen that, in obedience to the orders of the Imperial Government, free grants were given to militiamen who had served in the war of 1775 when the Province was invaded by the Americans. 232,281 acres were so granted to militiamen. Those who served in the war of 1812 were also rewarded in the same manner and received 217,840 acres for their services.

All these grants were subject to the ordinary conditions of settlement and to the stipulation that the lands granted would revert to the Crown if the conditions were not fulfilled. But the colonial administration took no trouble to have these conditions observed and to cancel the grants nearly all of which passed into the hands of influential speculators. As soon as the militiamen received their letters patent they sold their lands for a trifle, in many instances for a bottle of rum.

GRANTS IN THE DISTRICT OF GASPÉ.

We have already seen that shortly after the American revolution, the Government sent into Gaspé district a certain number of loyalists to whom it gave lands, without, at the same time, giving them regular title deeds. It was the same with the Acadians who had no other title than tradition to the lands they occupied. When the population began to increase a little, land became comparatively scarcer and difficulties arose nearly everywhere in connection with real estate, difficulties which were all the harder to settle that there were no title deeds of the grants to establish the pretensions of the various claimants. In order to put an end to the troubles, the Legislature, in 1819, passed the act 59 Geo. III, chap. 3, authorizing the Government to appoint commissioners to make inquiries on the spot and to decide the ownership of the properties in dispute. Section 9 of the said act enacts as follows:

"The said Commissioners shall, from time to time, transmit to the Clerk of the Executive Council of this Province a report of all such claims as they shall have examined and decided and the person or persons in whose favour they shall have reported shall be considered as entitled to have a grant or grants under the Great Seal of the Province of the lands in respect of which such report shall be made."

38550