

or impropriety of a registry-law, in which many learned and patriotic men disagree. Inasmuch as such a law would give encouragement to usury, in lending money upon mortgage, it may not only be injurious to settlers, but also, since all kinds of usury, and even the taking of common interest, are forbidden by the Roman catholic religion, and considered as sins, visitable by penance and restitution, it may be also objectionable to conscientious catholics. But one very fair reason to be adduced by the French Canadians against it, is, that being themselves a simple, honest, and fairdealing people, they need it not, for, excepting where contaminated by an intercourse with the foreign traders who come amongst them, every man's word is his bond, and tricks and dishonesty are unknown. Moreover the anxiety which has been shewn on this head, may be ascribed to a rapacious desire in the mercantile interest, to become possessed not only of the ready cash, but also of the lands and tenements, of that population who have enriched them by taking off their goods *manufactured for exportation*. And if the Canadians shew a jealousy on this head, they are justified by the examples held out to them in the provinces of the Roman empire, where the proconsuls and other great men from the capital, carried the abuse of arbitrary purchases of land to such an extent, that it was ordained, as Cicero informs us, *Neminem qui cum potestate, aut legatione, in provinciam esset profectus, tant amentem fore putaverunt, ut emerent argentum*; whosoever was sent with power, or authority, into a province, should not be allowed to make any manner of purchase; Because, *In provinciis intelligebant, si is, qui esset cum imperio et potestate, quod apud quemque esset, emere vellet, idque ei liceret, fore uti, quod quisque vellet, sive esset venale, sive non esset, quanti vellet, auferret*; they were convinced that if, in a province, any one backed with power and authority, should be permitted to buy what he pleased, it would ultimately enable him to get hold of whatever he had a mind to, whether for sale or not, at his own price. *Orat. ix. l. 4. c. 5.* Query; are not the large grants of land in the townships, to such persons as Simon M'Favish, William M'Gillivray, Isaac Todd, Joseph Froisher, John Gregory, Robert Ellice, &c. which, by having been wholly neglected for a series of years, have more retarded the improvement and prosperity of that part of the country, than any thing else, something akin to the oppression of the Roman provincial officers? And do they not exemplify the rapacious dispositions of these men?

L. L. M.

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