

Without doubt many of those who went to St. Eustache were coerced into doing so. The prime movers in the agitation locally were the doctors, lawyers, notaries and other men of some education, imbued with an inordinate love for everything French, and a corresponding hatred of everything British, and who used the influence that position and education exercised on behalf of armed rebellion. They resorted also to drastic measures and took precautions to force the adhesion of all those whom they thought ought to be on their side, and to insure that any man having once put his hand to the plough should not, at the eleventh hour, look backward. These results were obtained largely by the help of press gangs which scoured the country when the time for action arrived.

The church dignitaries came out emphatically against the movement, but some have alleged that the parochial clergy were largely passive. If such was the case those who wished to resist coercion into the rebel ranks were left without encouragement from a quarter from which they might well have expected it. As it was, only those whose wits were sharp enough to incite them to individual action escaped conscription.

In the disaffected district of which St. Eustache was the centre it was not safe to be found at home when the press gang paid one a visit, unless one had been bitten by the mad dog, Rebellion, and was prepared to march away with it. In the parish of St. Martin a French Canadian carpenter was taken by the press gang at his home at Cote St. Elzear and, though he positively refused to bear arms, was made to do duty as a teamster and carried off to St. Eustache, the press gang making vigorous but ineffectual search for his several brothers, even probing thoroughly with their bayonets the hay-stacks and potato heaps, or pits.

Young Farmer Basil Piché, of St. Monique, aware of the methods of the rebels, and recognizing how exceed-

ingly bitter the feeling against him was, buried what arms he possessed, secreted as much of his stock as possible, and betook himself, through the bush and through by-ways (for the roads were heavily patrolled) to Montreal, whence he did not return till he did so in the wake of Colborne's column three weeks later. During his absence the press gang visited his farm and, finding only his wife, searched unsuccessfully for arms and drove off the remainder of his stock to provision the rebel army gathering at St. Eustache, about twelve miles distant. The experiences of himself and family are interesting.

His father was enrolling officer (probably adjutant or major) for the militia in the district, and he himself was captain. Their duties consisted, respectively, in compiling and forwarding annually to the Government an accurate list of the fighting men, and in mustering them (for roll call only), once a year, viz., 4th June, King George Third's birthday. As was natural, the parish of St. Monique, being so much nearer St. Eustache than Le Nord and Bellefeuilles' Mills, the disaffection was more pronounced and the accompanying disturbances more blackguardly. The mutilation of the Loyalists' horses was here carried on in broad daylight by the rebels outside the church during the celebration of the most solemn service of their religion, the unfortunate Loyalists thus becoming objects of derision and the laughing-stock of the majority of the parish. Besides this, patrols of about eighteen men went around intimidating the people, securing arms, driving off cattle and stealing everything they could lay hands on. Forceful enlistment, as elsewhere, was a feature of their visits, and those who objected were promptly taken as prisoners to St. Eustache, and, it is asserted, actually placed in front during the action. Search was invariably made from top to bottom of a house for ammunition, and, in many cases, the interior was wrecked if the owner were not a "patriot"(!). Naturally