

be a valid reason for the present Lieutenant-Governor's doing likewise. The most extraordinary statement, however, in the whole correspondence, is the answer made by Mr. DeBoucherville to displeasure marked by the Lieutenant-Governor at the attempt, in the "Act respecting the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway," to over-ride and set aside the authority of the Courts of the land. The Premier's reply was, that: "The Government, while undertaking, in the first place, by the said law to fulfil the conditions which had been agreed upon with the said municipalities, considered that in substituting for the ordinary Courts, the Lieutenant-Governor with an Executive Council responsible to the Legislature and to the people, it offered to the parties interested a tribunal which afforded as many guarantees as the ordinary Courts." What must strike one most forcibly in reading such a document as the above, is the stupendous ignorance and self-conceit of the men who drafted and approved of it. To begin with, the lawyers forming part of the Ministry might, perhaps, be considered competent to discharge the duties of District Magistrates, but there is not one of them qualified to fill, with dignity, a seat on the Superior Court Bench. This fact is notorious to the whole profession. In the second place, supposing them to have been qualified, which they were not, they were parties to the case, and on that ground every one of them should have been recused. And finally, the greatest objection of all, under our Constitution, the administrative, legislative and judicial branches must be kept separate and distinct, no two can be merged without serious danger to the interests and liberties of the subject. The legislative and executive, through the subserviency of the Council and the venality of the Assembly, may be said to have become one, the Legislature as they fully proved being prepared to pass any measure, however arbitrary and unconstitutional, at the bidding of the Ministry, by securing judicial powers as well to enforce their unjust laws, the thralldom of the Province would have been complete. Then would have been witnessed in its most literal sense, the old Bourbon boast "*Comme veut le roi, ainsi dit le roi.*" The attempt to close the law courts, as the Lieutenant-Governor pointed out in his communication to the Governor-General was a direct infringement of the privileges of the Magna Charta, he might have added that it was a tyrannical measure, the first attempt to enforce which in all probability would have been met by armed resistance and resulted in blood-shed.