

He had taught the savages "*to assert their native rights*" to the ceded territory, and he was equally ready to teach the Acadian French to refuse to take the oath of allegiance to Great Britain, which it was necessary that they should take, if they expected to enjoy her confidence and protection. Five years after Lieutenant-Governor Canfield's attempt to make them take this oath, General Phillips made another attempt, and we find Père Gaulin acting on the occasion as their spokesman. His majesty, he said, was very good to interest himself in their affairs, but that the proposal meant nothing less than a violation of their oath before Governor Nicholson, and that they wished to remain faithful to their word without changing anything, because if they modified its terms, it would expose them to the resentment and vengeance of the savages. This subterfuge, for it was nothing less, was understood by the English, as appears by the minutes of the Council, September 27th, 1720—

"That the French inhabitants do persist in refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain, and look upon themselves as the indispensable liege subjects of France, by the engagement they have laid themselves under, and from which their Priests tell them they cannot be absolved. . . . That these inhabitants and the Indians are entirely influenced and guided by the Government of Cape Breton, and the missionary Priests residing among them."

This condition of affairs caused the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations to address a memorial to the King, in which they said that the Acadians, who have remained in the province since the cession, "are entirely in the French interest, and by their communication and intermarriages with the neighbouring Indians, have gained them to their party; whereby they are enabled upon any occasion to engage the said Indians in a war against your Majesty's subjects—that the little trade derived in this country at present is entirely in the hands of these French