

And this is a reminder that these people, knowing that the principles of monarchy and aristocracy were really opposed to them, that they were in office solely through the charms exerted over the mind of the King by a woman without conscience and thoroughly heartless, looked about at the troubles they were causing and were afraid. Like all of their kind they sought to shift the responsibility of their crimes on other shoulders. They had stipended every writer of the age—for no writer could exist, except anonymously and be opposed to them. This crowd of known writers were bought from Voltaire down—to attack the church, the state and the ancient noblesse. Unable to continue in power in the face of the ancient aristocracy without exciting an overwhelming opposition certain to burst forth so soon as Madame Pompadour's rule might expire, these "financiers," these "anoblis" determined, if possible, to ruin both kingdom and noblesse, and to stand alone as the proper republic in which they as a gigantic and corrupting mercantile and political "trust" might control the ignorant and easily led populace—the image of every democratical republic that has ever existed. Most of their children survived the Revolution of 1792 which their plans and devices brought about, and although some of them perished in the unexpected heat which they had kindled, the remainder made fortunes out of the "confiscated" royalist estates.

One of these creatures of Pompadour and of the trading anoblis, named Bigot, obtained the lucrative place of intendant in Canada about the time of Montcalm. All subordinate places in the civil service were open only to this kind. "He saw in the misfortunes of the province only so many means of adding to his wealth." (Dussieux.) Among those who were most successful in their stealings of his appointees were Cadet, a former butcher; Verin, at Montreal, Hugues Pean, naval commissary and major at Quebec; Mercier, a merchant's clerk; also Carpian and Maurin of the same profession; Breard, comptroller of the marine; D'Estebe, keeper of stores at Quebec who stole nearly a million, and Perrault, an inn-keeper, who was appointed major-general of militia. But this Bigot, a prime favorite of Pompadour, was a prince among thieves. "He was the giant of the fable with an hundred hands, and every hand a thievish one. It was said that every official stole from the intendant and

comptroller down to the smallest cadet." (De Bonnechese in Montcalm.)

"The people employed by Bigot are the most flourishing in the colony. Honest men starve, while rogues make fortunes. They make fortunes by getting control of the right to provision places. From money devoted to public works they steal again; again in furnishing the material of war and for naval equipment; again in merchandise to be delivered to the Indians. Through this dishonesty the colony rests disarmed in the face of the enemy, wrote Montcalm. 'Dishonesty has become treason. They have given the soldiers guns whose stocks break like glass. They have made ditches in the place of forts—that of Carillon, full of defects, costs as much to the King as Brisack and serves but to enrich the engineers of the country.'" (De Bonnechese in Montcalm.)

The complaints of Montcalm were seconded by Bourgainville, Levis, Doreil and all the military noblesse, but they were counteracted by the influence of Pompadour. But when the army and its officers returned to France, their complaints had to be heard. De Sartines, lieutenant of police, was instructed to institute a trial to judge sovereignly the "authors of prevarications committed in Canada." Bigot and fifty-five others appeared before this commission. They were condemned to restore only 12,000,000 francs and Bigot and Varin were banished from court, when, according to the laws of France, their desert should have been the halter.

It must be understood that the "court nobility" that began to date from this period was different in blood as well as principle from the old feudal aristocracy. In blood, the former was Gallo-Roman, derived from the burgesses, the rich trading and speculating classes of the towns, and especially of Paris; the latter was Franco-Gothic and descended from the Paladins and Knights of Charlemagne who had established the French monarchy. It was a principle of this latter, that trade is dishonoring, not because work is ignoble (far otherwise) but that the qualities of mind (the chicane, the avarice, the dishonesty) that make trade successful are not compatible with nobility. For this a law was made that "trading causes derogation of blood and loss of privileges." But these were the very qualities on which was built up the new court nobility, like as at the present time in England, the same are at the foundation of the Anglo-Saxon "noblesse