

gentlemen in the province of Quebec in the olden days. The object of these gentlemen, Sir, in those days was agitation just as it is the object of these demagogues to-day. The hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) endeavoured to prove the other day that the agitation in favour of independence or the establishment of a republic was not due to Papineau. But in the heat of debate in 1835, Mr. Papineau forgot his ordinary prudence and avowed himself a republican in principle. He said :

The time had gone by when Europe could give monarchies to America. On the contrary the time is now approaching when America will give republics to Europe.

This is the sort of stuff our good friends in the province of Quebec have been fed upon all these long years, and unfortunately the plain truth, except at very brief intervals when men like Chapleau stood well to the front, has never been placed before them.

Mr. LEMIEUX. In the good city of Toronto does my hon. friend not know there is a gentleman named Goldwin Smith who advocates political union between Canada and the United States?

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I have never said that we have not gentlemen in the English-speaking provinces who profess these sentiments, but what I do say is that when men like Goldwin Smith come to the front and advocate such doctrines, they are answered by gentlemen who speak and write the English language. But when men advocating such theories go through the province of Quebec, our friends bow before them and wait for a reaction to set in when the people of that province will find out for themselves the true facts of the situation. Speaking of the agitation in favour of toleration and the rights of the people and all that sort of thing, the historian points out on page 44 that indignation meetings were held in various parts of the province at which violent resolutions were passed, and at these meetings Mr. Papineau was the chief orator, and was escorted by his countrymen from one district to another.

Again the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. A. Lavergne) as well as the hon. member for Labelle, dilated at length on the injustice of the Britishers after they had conquered that country. I wish to point out, and to prove, that the British people used the people of the province of Quebec exactly as they have used the people of every country they have conquered, they used them as liberally as the people themselves wished to be used, and finally the imperial government gave to the people of Quebec liberties that they had never asked for and did not want. This historian says :

Before the conquest Canada was a purely military colony, and subjected like France, to a

Mr. SAM. HUGHES.

despotism of a most exacting and imperious character. While the custom of the Parisian tribunals, and the edicts of the French monarch, formed the statute law of the country, its administration was confided to a governor and an intendant, who, unchecked by a public press, and having the patronage of the whole colony completely at their disposal, usually acted upon the caprice of the moment, and were generally to set public opinion, such as it was, completely at defiance. Having thus means to provide for the more educated, they either silenced or enlisted on their side every person of influence. The common people, steeped in the grossest ignorance, and oppressed by feudal exactions submitted without a murmur, from long habit, to the arrogant claims and pretensions of their seigneurs and also of the public officials. The meanest officer of the government was regarded with the most slavish fear, and his mandate promptly obeyed, while their superiors were generally looked upon by the habitants as almost beings of a higher order in creation to themselves. By these they were treated with the greatest severity. In the law courts, as we have already seen, the torture was frequently applied, while, by the military authorities, they were compelled to serve as soldiers without pay, and in every condition of life taught that the one cardinal virtue was a blind and implicit obedience to those in power.

This was the condition of this splendid people when the British government took hold of the province of Quebec in 1763, as portrayed by an eminent French clergyman at the time.

The people, ignorant, and what was worse, contented in their ignorance, looked upon their own laws and customs as equally admirable and excellent, and, like the Chinese, regarded the rest of the world, France alone excepted, as 'outside barbarians.'

Then there is the testimony of clergymen and others writing about the country. I will quote only one of them—the Duke de Rochefoucault :

No Canadian has just grounds of complaint against the British government. They acknowledge they are better treated now than ever, but they love the French—forget them not, long after them, hope for their arrival, and will always love them. In their estimation a Frenchman is a being much superior to the native of Great Britain. The farmers are a frugal set of people, but ignorant and lazy.

* These are the words of a Frenchman, writing of these people after a visit to Canada forty years after the British conquest. Then an American writer of that time, the distinguished scholar Silliman, says :

It is questionable whether any conquered country was ever better treated by its conquerors than Canada ; the people were left in complete possession of their religion, and the revenues for its support, as well as their property, laws, customs and manners, and even the defence of their country is no expense to them.

Then what becomes of the cry of these hon. gentlemen, that the people were ground down under the heel of the British govern-