

system and opened the door to several communications concerning the questions of the day. That coincided with the creation of *The Upper Canada Gazette*, published at Newark in 1790.

Contrary to what is generally believed, books were not unknown to the French population of the colony during the second half of the 18th century. It is stated that there were at least 60,000 volumes in the private libraries about the year 1765, and many others were received after that date; so that we may fairly say that there was one volume for every soul of the population in the province. Any one conversant with the habits of the best families of the period in question understand readily that those people were educated not only in manners and outside politeness, but equally by reading and by that practice of conversation and "*causerie de salon*" which is so much French—a great school for learning what you have not yet gathered from books. The literature of the reigns of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. (1660 to 1760), therefore, composed the main elements of a Canadian library by the end of the 18th century. Its influence is visible on every page written in those days, either for the public press or in private letters. We know, besides, nearly all the books then to be found in Canada, because a great many of them have been preserved by the descendants of the owners and handed down to us.

At the outbreak of the French Revolution a movement was noticeable amongst the politicians in France to favour "the English system of government," in other words, the constitutional administration, but this could not be made clear for the masses, unless some written explanations be furnished. A lawyer by the name of De Lolme (a French Swiss) seems to have sounded the correct note, and his work became classical at its first edition. No sooner had a copy of it been received in Canada, that the members of the Legislative Assembly, who were forty-two French speaking men out of a total of fifty, turned their attention to that Alcoran, but as the session was drawing near to its end, it was thought better to arrange for a series of meetings in Quebec, Three Rivers, Sorel, Chambly and Montreal, where the members could gather by small detachments and examine the "book of revelations" at ease. This was done, and it produced a good effect, inasmuch as it allowed some practical information to make its way through the heads of our representative men.

The spirit of the times is indicated by the insertion in the *Quebec Gazette* of several articles clipped from Parisian newspapers, and all necessarily of a "high tone" at that hour, when the Convention reigned supreme at Paris. We dare say no French Canadian publication would have been allowed to do the same thing. Such was again the spirit of the times. A French Canadian could not be otherwise than a bad subject!

The Duke of La Rochefoucauld, who visited Upper Canada in 1795, says that the people there were not so eager for news as the inhabitants