

PREFACE

The substance of the following pages was presented to the Board of Historical Studies of the University of Oxford in Hilary Term, 1899, in supplication for the degree of Bachelor of Letters. Having successfully served this purpose, the thesis is now presented to the public in an enlarged and somewhat improved form in the hope that the new results which it embodies may not be without interest to those who desire to study the beginnings of trade and commerce in New France.

I am by no means so sanguine as to hope that the conclusions here set forth are necessarily final or indeed in every case valid. Since, however, their correctness or incorrectness can only be made clear by an examination of the foundations on which they rest, I have taken pains to state in all cases what my authorities are. The Appendix at the end of the work will be of use in further making clear on what foundations particular statements are based.

In preparing this essay I have had the kind assistance of many persons. To the authorities of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* at Paris my best thanks are due for the extreme courtesy with which they have always received my numerous demands. M. G. Servois and his able staff at the *Archives Nationales*, M. M. Chevrier of the French Foreign Office, and M. Victor Tantet of the French Colonial Office have also afforded me every facility in consulting their respective stores of documents. During my re-