

cards were issued and signed by the intendant;¹ and in periods of military storm and stress, when expenses were extraordinarily heavy, the temptation to issue them in large quantities was naturally too great to be resisted. Through overissues and tardiness in redemption the card money depreciated so much in value that, during the years just prior to Wolfe's victory, the luckless colony fairly floundered in the slough of inconvertible paper. With the exception of Bigot, however, none of the intendants seem to have used the power of issuing card money to their own enrichment.²

Taken as a whole, the powers of the Canadian intendant were very extensive—vastly more extensive, indeed, than were those of any other official in the colony. His discretionary power was wide, and the great distance which separated him from his only superiors at Versailles made it necessary that he should use this power constantly and extensively. With a single important exception, the eleven intendants who actually performed the duties of their office in New France exercised their wide powers with moderation and judgment as well as with honesty. Duchesneau showed himself somewhat too combative in temperament, but it must be borne in mind that Frontenac afforded him ample provocation. Dupuy was rather untautful in his relations with his colleagues; and Beauharnois was scarcely long enough in the colony to permit one to judge of his capabilities as an administrator. Talon, Champigny, Meulles, Raudot, Bégon, and Hocquart, however, were all men who rose well to the responsibilities of their post. The first and last named not only possessed in a high degree both administrative skill and enthusiasm for the royal interests, but gave freely of their private means for the advancement of those interests.³ It is therefore hardly fair to say

¹ Some idea of the extent of the issues may be had from the fact that in 1730 some two thousand packs of cards were used. The intendant, Hocquart, in one of his despatches complained that the task of signing so many cards was tedious and that this work occupied the larger part of his spare time. After 1733 the intendant was relieved of this work, the card money henceforth bearing only the signature of the controller of the marine at Quebec.

² In addition to the card money, treasury notes for larger denominations were issued. Bigot, in 1748, arranged that these should be printed, and issued them in large quantities. The whole question of the currency system of the French period in Canada is elaborately discussed in Adam Shortt's articles on "Canadian Currency and Exchange under French Rule", in *Journal of the Canadian Bankers' Association*, 1898-1899, V. 271, 385, VI. 1, 147, 233; James Stevenson's "Card Money in Canada during the French Domination", *Quebec Literary and Historical Society, Transactions*, 1873-1875, pp. 84-112; Lareau's "Monnaie de Cartes au Canada", *Revue de Montréal*, II. 433-438; and N. E. Dionne's "La Monnaie Canadienne sous le Régime Français", in *Revue Canadienne*, XXIX. 30-32, 72-83.

³ Hocquart, it is recorded, furnished from his own means the funds for the erection of the church at Tadoussac in 1747. See Coquart's journal, in R. G. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, LXIX. 137.