

Slavery in Old Canada

Before and After
the Conquest

READ BEFORE THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL
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BY

COLONEL HUBERT NEILSON

That the blot of slavery existed at one time in this fair land of ours is a fact mentioned by few of our historical writers. Some gloss over the fact, others allude to it in a most casual manner, others are silent. Garneau, considered by our French Canadian fellow citizens as the best and most patriotic historian of this Province, in his anxiety to exonerate the French Government from the odium of authorizing slavery, deliberately misquotes the rescripts of that government granting permission to hold negro slaves in Canada, dated 31st October and 6th November, 1688. At page 167, Vol. II of his *Histoire du Canada* (3rd edit. 1859) he says. "I must refer here to a decision which brings great honor to the French government with regard to the exclusion of slaves from Canada, a colony which the King loved above all others on account of the war-like character of its inhabitants; a colony destined to resemble Old France; the home of a gallant gentry, the people animated with sentiments truly national, catholic, and above all French with no admixture of foreign blood. In 1688, permission was asked to bring negroes to the colony. The Government replied that it feared that the climate would be too rigorous for them. This reply sufficed to save our country