

From this point of view, a special interest surrounds the Province of Quebec,—a province which though greatly less in extent than the Canada that fell with Montcalm, includes the territory upon which the features of the Old Régime were most distinctly impressed. In those portions of the continent afterwards called the United States of America, the peculiar genius of Englishmen for selfgovernment, was developed without the modifications that result when different races of dissimilar political genius dwell side by side. In the history of New France, however, the student of political affairs meets a state of things altogether unique. He finds a territory and people controlled at great distance from another continent. When the fortunes of war transfer the eminent domain to another European power, this people still continue to occupy the land and to enjoy their own language, customs, laws, and religion. The conqueror, however, transplants certain of his own peculiar political ideas; and the spectacle is thus presented of dual language, race, laws and institutions, existing side by side, and together influencing the course of events.

To pursue an enquiry into the whole subject of the relations between French and English system of law and social order, would prove too wide for the limits of a thesis of moderate dimensions. One part only of this field shall we attempt to survey that of Administrative Law in Canada during the time of the French Régime.

“The physiognomy of a government” says De Tocqueville “can best be judged in its colonies; for there, its characteristic traits usually appear larger and more distinct. When I wish to discover the spirits and the vices of the government of Louis XIV, I must go to Canada.” It is often instructive, however, to reverse historical process. The condition