



THE COLONIAL JETONS OF LOUIS XV.



IN the latter part of the reign of Louis XV, a series of pieces relating to the French colonies in America were issued by the Mint of France,—not coins nor medals,—but known as Jetons. They have been referred to in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, but deserve a more extended notice. Their devices and legends, although somewhat boastful, are poetic in conception, and refined in expression; interesting in themselves, they are doubly so when considered in connection with the history of the French colonies in America, which will be briefly noticed before any description of them is given.

The first French settlement on the northern coast of America was made in 1604, at the Island of St. Croix, on the river now bearing the same name, under the provisions of a patent granted to De Monts for the colonization of New France, which, by its terms, extended from the fortieth to the forty-sixth degree of north latitude. There had been for many years visits to, and explorations of, the continent, as well as landings and attempts at settlement; but the first settlement which continued any length of time was at the island, then named St. Croix, now known as De Monts' Island. Subsequently, a mission of the Roman Catholic Church was established at Mt. Desert, in Penobscot Bay, which was broken up by Capt. Argall in 1613. In 1608, Quebec was founded by Champlain, at a place which he had visited on a previous exploration of the St. Lawrence. The next year he discovered the lake far to the south, which has ever since borne his name. From and after 1615, missionaries of the Roman Church came over from France on the solicitation of Champlain, and to the zeal and self-sacrificing devotion of this body of men and