

the country after the Conquest, there is given a very moderate estimate of the expenses for the closing years of French rule. It is as follows :—

|           |              |           |               |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1754..... | 6,000,000 l. | 1758..... | 24,000,000 l. |
| 1755..... | 5,500,000    | 1759..... | 30,000,000    |
| 1756..... | 8,000,000    | 1760..... | 1,300,000     |
| 1757..... | 12,000,000   |           |               |

These figures are below most of the French estimates, even some of those of Bigot himself.

The finances of the colony were in a state of hopeless confusion. There was no proper check upon payments made at the various posts, no adequate supervision of the manner in which supplies were furnished under contract, and no limitation upon the treasury paper issued by the intendant, who alone signed it. There was thus the most direct encouragement to fraud of every kind.

About the end of 1758 the French government began to wake up to the necessity for numerous reforms in the system, and in the beginning of 1759 a long letter from M. Berryer, the minister, to Bigot, indicates that the government is quite aware of the very unsatisfactory state of the Canadian finances and currency. He enjoins on Bigot some immediate reforms, and indicates many others which must be made as soon as affairs permit. But even immediate reforms were by this time impossible. All method was abandoned in the effort to avoid destruction.

The value of the paper money was going down rapidly. Even before the loss of Quebec ready money was at a premium of one-third, notwithstanding the repeated assurances of the authorities that the king's obligations would be faithfully met.

To the last Bigot, in his reports to the minister, maintained an attitude of frank and cheerful virtue. In April, 1759, he states that his anticipations of a very considerable increase in the expenditure promise to be more than realized, as he estimates now that the exchanges to be drawn will amount to from thirty-one to thirty-three millions. He still claims freedom from all responsibility for the expenses at the posts and forts. The certificates all come to him through the usual channels, and it is impossible to closely scrutinize them in time of war. He