

The means of knowing the Canada of the past are ample. The pen was always busy in this outpost of the old monarchy. The king and the minister demanded to know every thing; and officials of high and low degree, soldiers and civilians, friends and foes, poured letters, despatches, and memorials, on both sides of every question, into the lap of government. These masses of paper have in the main survived the perils of revolutions and the incendiary torch of the Commune. Add to them the voluminous records of the Superior Council of Quebec, and numerous other documents preserved in the civil and ecclesiastical depositories of Canada.

The governments of New York and of Canada have caused a large part of the papers in the French archives, relating to their early history, to be copied and brought to America, and valuable contributions of material from the same quarter have been made by the State of Massachusetts and by private Canadian investigators. Nevertheless, a great deal has still remained in France, uncopied and unexplored. In the course of several visits to that country, I have availed myself of these supplementary papers, as well as of those which had before been copied, sparing neither time nor pains to explore every part of the field. With the help of a system of classified notes, I have collated the evidence of the various writers, and set down

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