

CARDINAL TASCHEREAU

Every country has its privileged families which seem destined to hold a prominent position in the ranks of society.

This distinction that attaches to particular names is not the result of chance; it is better explained as a mission confided by Providence to certain families as to individuals, and justified by heredity of talent and virtue.

Such is the family of His Eminence Cardinal Taschereau, one of the oldest and most distinguished in Canada.

The head of this family in our country was Thomas Jacques Taschereau, who came from Touraine and settled here early in the eighteenth century. In the year 1736, he obtained the grant of a seignior in the vicinity of the Chaudière river.

At Quebec, in 1728, he married Maria Fleury-d'Eschambault, the grandchild of Joliette, the renowned discoverer of the Mississippi.

He died in 1749, leaving eight children, all of whom, with the exception of Gabriel Elzéar, died on their return to France. Gabriel left four children; the youngest, Jean Thomas, married Marie Panet, daughter of the honourable Antoine Panet, first president of the old parliament of Canada.

Jean Thomas was named judge, and, having shown marked ability on the bench for some years, succumbed to an attack of cholera in 1832.

His two children shed a lustre on the name that he did not live to enjoy. One of these, the honourable Jean Taschereau, is a retired judge of the superior court; and the other, the subject of this sketch.

Cardinal Elzéar Alexandre Taschereau was born at Ste. Marie de la Beauce, at the seigniorial manor of the family, on the 17th February, 1820.

At the early age of eight years, he entered the Quebec seminary