

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE OLD RÉGIME IN CANADA. ¹

I

European institutions in America—France at the beginning of the 17th Century—L'état c'est moi—The French Canadians as Britons—Administrative Law in England and France—Edicts and Ordinances of the Old Régime.

The growth of social and political institutions in America must always possess great fascination for the student of human affairs ; for there it is possible to trace the effect of the transplanting of European forms of government and administration, with such modifications as have been adopted of choice or necessity.

Within certain limits, the introduction of the political forms and institutions of Europe into America, illustrates the tendencies that were then dominant in the older continent. It is easy, for instance, to trace in the constitution of the United States, with its system of checks and balances, the conceptions of kingly power and the relations of parliament thereto, that were prevalent during the reign of George the Third ; while the absolutism of Louis Quatorze, is nowhere more apparent than in the paternal government that was established in New France.

¹ We publish here the first and last chapters of a very noteworthy thesis submitted by our esteemed confrère Robert Stanley Weir, of the Montreal Bar, to the Faculty of Law of McGill University, for the degree of Doctor of Civil Law. It gives the origin of many of our public and administrative laws, and also of our first municipal régime. The sixth chapter refers specially to the administration of justice and the sources of authority and will be reproduced in our next number. The thesis is neatly printed and is offered for sale by M. Théoret law-book publisher, No 11 St James at the moderate price of \$1.00.