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### I. BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH.

"It were far better as things now stand to be charged with heresy than to fall under the suspicion of lacking historical-mindedness, or of questioning the universal validity of the historical method:" Dicey, *Constitution*, p. 14.

Before the conquest of Quebec in September, 1759, the criminal law of Old Canada was contained in the celebrated criminal ordinance promulgated by Louis Quatorze in 1670; "ordonnance inhumaine et barbare, au dire de tous les historiens:" Lemieux, p. 313.