

## **Literature and Historical Notes.**

When the Royal Institution was first organized in 1818, it was intended that all the schools then existing in the province should be placed under its supervision; and hence, in order to maintain, as far as possible, a unity in our narrative, we must seek at this stage to place on record something of the schools established in the province from the time when the Recollet fathers took up their abode in Canada to the date of the founding of the Royal Grammar Schools.

To the Recollets is due the honour of starting the first school in the country. During Champlain's visit to France in 1614, among other arrangements of his for the benefit of the colony to whose interests he had determined to devote his life, he succeeded in inducing the above religious order to undertake a mission in the New World. The first of these missionaries to arrive were Fathers Jamay, Dolbeau, Le Caron and Duplessis. Dolbeau remained at Quebec, while the others proceeded to the Indian settlement at the mouth of the St. Maurice, near the tract of land where the town of Three Rivers now stands. There it was that Duplessis, who, however, was better known to those of his own time under the name of Brother Pacifique, opened a school for the instruction of the savages. Of the character of this, the first attempt to extend the light of religious knowledge in the New World by means of the day-school, we have no certain knowledge, though it could not be different from the school which Brother Le Caron opened at Tadousac two years later, and of which he wrote to the head of his order at home in the following manner:—"I have gone to Tadousac," he said, "to be of some assistance to the Indians of these places—to give them some instruction, and to administer the sacraments to the French, and to those who live there during the trading season. I would have had quite a number of children to instruct, had I had the means of subsistence to give them. As it is, I have laid before some of them the alphabet, and they have made a good beginning in reading and writing. M. Houel will be able to show you some specimens of their work, which I have sent to him. And thus it is that I conduct open school in our house at Tadousac, in order to attract the savages, to render them sociable, and to accustom them to our ways of living."