

D'Argenson's health failed him, and having at his own request been recalled he was succeeded by Baron d'Avangour, who upon his arrival examined into the condition of the colony, and found that owing to the neglect of the Company everything was in a wretched plight. Trade, and not good government, was the aim of the Company, and now for the first time it became manifest either that possession of the colony should be taken from the Company, or that the Company and the colony should be left a prey to the Indians. A direct appeal for protection was made by the inhabitants to the throne of France. The fruit of this appeal was the despatch of Monsieur de Monts from France, as a special commissioner to inquire into the state of the colony. He arrived in 1662. It was during this year that Canada was the scene of a terrific earthquake, which it is said lasted, with little intermission, for the space of six months. At the Bay of St. Paul's a mountain was thrown into the River St. Lawrence and formed an Island. At Point aux Allouettes an entire forest was detached from the land and thrown into the river. The ice which at the time covered the St. Lawrence was hurled into the air, and fell in masses of appalling grandeur. Rivers were diverted from their courses. Some rivers became in color red, others yellow; while the St. Lawrence, from Quebec to Tadousac, was white. The earth, the heavens, and all that was visible during this earthquake is described as having presented an awful appearance. The desolation that ensued was not at all calculated to lessen the dissatisfaction of the colonists suffering under the misrule of the Company.

No sooner had Monsieur de Monts returned to France than arrangements were made to deprive the Company of its privileges; but on 14th February, 1663, they voluntarily surrendered them, and the surrender was, in May following formally accepted. Monsieur de Mézy was forthwith appointed governor of the colony for a period of three years from his arrival at Quebec. M. Robert, a counsellor of State, was appointed Intendant of Police, Finance, and Marine, but never arrived in the country; and on 7th May, 1663, Monsieur Gaudais was appointed a special commissioner to obtain information, among other things, of the situation of the colony, the length of the days and nights, the salubrity of the air, the regularity of the seasons, the fertility of the soil, the quantity of land under cultivation; the population of Quebec, Montreal, and Three Rivers—their occupation and means of subsistence; the tenure of lands, the production of wheat, and the nature and extent of debts and other obligations. In the instructions to Monsieur Gaudais, the want in the colony of some system of law was mentioned, and his Majesty, Louis the Fourteenth, declared his intention of creating a Sovereign Council, to consist of the Governor, the Intendant, and five other leading residents. In Novem-

ber, 1663, Monsieur Prouvelle de Tracy was commissioned Viceroy of the French Colonies in America, and by name over Canada, Acadia, Newfoundland, and the Islands of the Antilles. His authority was of the most extensive kind, paramount to that of all governors or lieutenant-governors of particular colonies.

When Monsieur de Gaudais arrived in the colony he administered the oath of allegiance to the inhabitants, regulated the Police, and made rules for the administration of justice. When de Mézy reached the colony, which he did at the same time as de Gaudais, he published a Royal Edict, creating a Sovereign Council, composed of de Mézy as Governor-General, representing the Crown, de Laval, Bishop of Petric, and five other councillors, to be elected by them, one to be Attorney General, and a Clerk for the preservation of arrears decrees, or orders of the Council; the Clerk to hold his appointment at the pleasure of the Governor and Bishop. The powers of the Sovereign Council were to take cognizance of all causes, civil as well as criminal; to judge sovereignly and in the last resort, according to the laws and ordonnances of France, and therein to proceed as near as possible in the form and manner practised and observed in the jurisdiction of the Court of Parliament at Paris; reserving, nevertheless, to the Monarch power to change, reform and amplify the said laws and ordonnances, and them to alter, repeal or renew, or such other regulations, statutes or constitutions as the Monarch might conceive to be useful to his service and the welfare of his subjects in the colony. Attached to the Sovereign Council there were Assessors, or men known to be well versed in the laws. These officers had a deliberative voice in causes in which it was their duty to report upon the law. The Sovereign Council was thus both a political and judicial body. It met regularly every Monday at the Intendant's palace, and special sessions were held at the pleasure of that officer. The custom of Paris and the ordonnances of France were made the law of the colony.

During the year 1664, a powerful West India Company was chartered, and by the edict chartering it the Company became possessed of the territory lying between the Rivers Amazon and Orinoko, the Charibee Islands, Canada, Acadia, Newfoundland and Africa. This immense territory was granted to the Company in seigneurie, but subject to be governed by the laws and ordonnances of France, and the custom of the Vicomte and Prevoté of Paris. Under this charter the Marquis de Tracy was ordered first to visit the West Indies, and then to visit Canada, to adopt such measures as he might see fit for the safety and tranquillity of the colonies.

De Mézy, as Governor of Canada, was in 1665 succeeded by Daniel de Remi, Seigneur of Courcelles; and on 23d