



THE name Toronto, originally spelled Otoronto or Otoronton and meaning "much" and then "many people" or "a place where many people meet," was first applied to the district between Lake Simcoe and Lake Huron. In 1686 the Governor of Canada, the Marquis de Denonville, wrote to France: "The letters I wrote to Sieurs du Lhu and de la Durantaye of which I sent you copies will inform you of my orders to them to fortify the two passages leading to Michilimaquina. Sieur du Lhu is at that of the Detroit of Lake Erie, and Sieur de la Durantaye at that of the portage of Toronto. These two posts will block the passage against the English, if they undertake to go again to Michilimaquina and will serve as retreats to the savages, our allies, either while hunting or marching against the Iroquois." At this date no such name was used of any place on Lake Ontario. A little later the waterways from Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario, the one by the Otonabee and Trent, the other by the Humber, seemed to have been called "Toronto River." Finally for some unknown reason possibly because of the dispersal of the Hurons the name was attached to the point on the shore of Lake Ontario where the path or portage to the Lake Simcoe district began. This point became very important when the English established a fort at Oswego and commenced to attract thither for fur-trading the Indians from the country around Toronto. The French were compelled to meet the situation by building a trading-post and fort here in 1749. They called the post Fort Rouillé after the French Colonial Minister of the day, but the name Toronto was too firmly fixed in popular usage to disappear. Traces of the old fort remained until the year 1878 and its site is now indicated by an obelisk which rises near the southwest corner of the Exhibition Grounds. The fort has been described "as a stockaded, wooden store-house, with quarters for a keeper and a few regular soldiers." In 1752 the Abbé Picquet found here "good bread