

simply a system of barter. Those early merchant adventurers laid in a stock of goods before leaving France, consisting mainly of arrow tips, swords, hatchets, knives, kettles, cloaks, blankets, hats, caps, shirts, various cloths, biscuit, tobacco, and various other trinkets. At first little liquor seems to have been disposed of. With these they sailed across the Atlantic, exchanging them with the Indians at Tadousac, or at other points, for furs such as beaver, elk, lynx, fox, otter, marten, badger and muskrat. Returning to France they disposed of their furs and repeated the operation the next season.

Trade growing, competition increasing and profits falling, efforts were made by some to obtain from the king a monopoly of the trade, usually on condition of establishing a colony and supporting missionaries. Lescarbot, the first Canadian historian, puts the case for the monopolists in its best form when he says, "Whether is it better to have the Christian religion and the glory of France extended, or to have certain individual merchants grow rich who do nothing for either. These individual merchants will neither plant colonies nor save the souls of the heathen. Further, through the competition of the merchants, beaver is selling at $8\frac{1}{2}$ l, whereas at the operation of the monopoly it was selling at 50 sols ($2\frac{1}{2}$ l)."

This gives the keynote of the general policy for the future. A monopoly of the Canadian trade was to be given to those who would undertake to colonize the country and support missionary enterprises. The earlier holders of this monopoly did little for colonization or the spread of the faith, but interested themselves only in the commercial privileges. Champlain was the first to take any real interest in the building up of a permanent colony in Canada. In 1608 he began at Quebec, the first colonial settlement on the St. Lawrence. In 1609 Du Monts' patent of monopoly, upon which Champlain was working, expired and, as he failed to get it renewed, the following year the St. Lawrence swarmed with private traders eager for furs. So strong was the competition that they ran their vessels up to Montreal in the hope of intercepting furbearing Indians. This did not afford a very promising outlook for Champlain's colony, which hoped to live largely by trade with the Indians. However, this first year's experience some-