

others, and using, I venture to say, with moderation and impartiality, but still with liberty, the right given, or rather the duty imposed by my position as reviewer, I ask no more than to be treated by my fellow critics as I treat those of whom I speak my mind : *Et refellere sine pertinacia et refelli sine iracundia parati sumus.* (Cicero, 2 Tusc., n. 5.)

It would doubtless have been more easy and agreeable for me to take, if I may use the expression, only the cream of the history of the New World. I should soon have reached the term of my career and had apparently more readers; but those who wish to be thoroughly informed, would have been obliged to turn to a host of books, not easily obtained, and some of them very rare, where the interesting facts are swallowed up in details and tedious accounts, and where it is not easy to separate truth from falsehood; and moreover, there are many, the perusal of which is not devoid of danger to morals and religion.

To come to the subject of the work which I now present to the public, I am sensible of all its disadvantages. It treats of an immense country, which, though two centuries have elapsed since our discovery of it, is even less peopled than it was then, although French enough have crossed to replace thrice over the Indians found there, and whom they cannot be reproached with having destroyed. This does not promise a history filled with interesting facts; but the history was called for, and with reason. It is the history of all the French colonies in the New World, which have been honored with the title of New France, or which have formed a part of it; and it was wanting. Moreover, it presents, at least in the origin of the principal settlements, only objects to heighten esteem for our nation, the only one which has possessed the secret of gaining the affection of the American.

In fact, the founders of these colonies, had it, for the most part, far more at heart to plant the Faith among the savages, than to acquire wealth; our kings recommended nothing more earnestly to those to whom they confided their authority, than the protection of religion, and have almost always sacrificed their own interest to this view, so worthy of the oldest sons of the Church. The sole motive of procuring the eternal salvation of these tribes, has led them more than once to reject the project of renouncing a country that was a burden. Who then has arrested the progress of the gospel among the Indians, and whence comes it, that the most ancient of our colonies, which should naturally be the most populous, is still the weakest of all? The course of this history will unveil it to those who take the pains to read attentively.