

France, and was often employed by the Governors-General, PENICAUT. from his skill in managing the minds of the Indians, almost all of whose dialects he spoke, and whose customs he had carefully studied. He was, moreover, a man of much ability.

The other I received from M. d'Artagnette, who was Commissaire Ordonnateur of Louisiana, and who had it from a man named Penicaut, who lived twenty years in the country, and was travelling all the time. He was a man of sense, who acquired great credit among most of the Indians of the continent, and who rendered important services to the colony. I found in both these manuscripts much light that I had sought in vain in printed works.

There would, however, have been many a hiatus in my history if I had not found wherewith to supply them in the original documents preserved at the Dépôt de la Marine, the custody of which was confided to the late M. de Clerambaut, Genealogist of the King's Orders. They have been of great use to me also as guides, to enable me to follow more surely a true path, when the authors whom I consulted were in danger of misleading me. All the documents are not indeed of equal authenticity ; but by reading them attentively, and confronting them with each other, you can easily find what to follow. Of a very great number it is impossible to dispute the authority ; such are, especially, the letters which the Chevalier de Callieres wrote regularly every year to the Ministers, at the time when he was Governor of Montreal, and after he was invested with the general government of New France. In them we see an intelligent, sincere, impartial officer, aiming solely at what is right, and we generally find there light to clear doubts that arise in reading the dispatches of governors and intendants, which very seldom harmonize. These same dispatches, especially those of the first governors, of Denonville, Frontenac, Vaudreuil, Champligny, Beauharnois, Raudot, and Begon, are, moreover, the real source whence I have drawn all that concerns the political and military government of New France ; and I can say, in proportion, the same of particular commandants, and of those who have directed Louisiana since it was made a distinct government.