

preceding years the court seemed to have determined to derive from them all the advantage that they could render to France.

1687.

Mr. de Meules, as already remarked, visited Acadia towards the close of the year 1685. On his return to Quebec he reported to the minister that the most useful settlement that his majesty could make in America was Acadia. He at the same time wrote to the king that New France could not, in its actual condition, maintain itself, and that the fur-trade was not enough to support it; that this was most unfortunate, the settlers being fitted for any thing; that in truth if we had all the furs of Canada it would be an important object, but this could not be reckoned on as long as there were Iroquois in the country and English in their vicinity.¹

Advice of Mr. de Meules as to what should be done for the country.

That this was not the case with Acadia, where there was nothing to prevent the establishment of fisheries; but that to be able to do so securely, it was necessary to settle and fortify Port Royal and to build a good fort at Pentagôt, to serve as a barrier for Acadia against the English; that if with this something could be expended on Port de la Héve, on the island of Cape Breton, Isle Percée, and in fortifying Placentia, in Newfoundland, which Sieur Parat, then in command there, was too weak to defend in case of attack, France would be sole mistress of the cod fisheries; but it was advisable that his majesty should incur all the expenses, and not farm out the fisheries so soon: by allowing those who undertook it to make some profit, he would soon be reimbursed for his outlay. He added, that having taken the census of all that depended on the government of Acadia, he had found nine hundred souls there.²

Towards the close of summer there was a great mortality in Canada,³ and this was what chiefly prevented Mr. de

¹ N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 272.

² Dénouville to Seignelay, October

³ Letters July 18-19, 1687, Canada 27, 1687, N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 354. Doc., II., v., p. 253.

Measles was brought by the ships,