

and if Colonel Dongan, although a Catholic, had acted towards the French in the manner that we have seen, and deferred so little to the wishes of his sovereign, whose religion he followed, it was to be expected that his successor would not obey that prince's orders more exactly.¹ The event, as we shall soon see, justified only too well the fears of the colony in this matter; but this was not what most troubled the general.

1688.

It is a maxim founded on reason, and daily confirmed by experience, that every State, every society, whatever forms a body, ecclesiastical or civil, runs much less risk from those who attacked it from without than from the disorders which it suffers internally from the non-observance of laws, and by all other causes that weaken its constitution and sap the foundations on which it rests. On this principle the Marquis de Dénouville beheld only with grief the sad state to which New France was reduced by the misconduct and insubordination which characterized the majority of those of whom that colony was composed.

He expresses himself thus in a letter to Mr. de Seignelay, dated the same day as that cited, and I have believed that it would be read here with pleasure almost entire, because it is very instructive, and contains the reflections of a man whose thoughts were just, and whose views all tended to the good of the State, and never deviated from the truth. After a short exposition of the prodigious change, wrought within a few years in a country where religion good faith, and the strictest probity had so long reigned, he adds :

“New settlements were pushed ahead of each other from a jealous desire to be nearer to the Indian trade without reflecting that, by not concentrating, they made it impossible for them to concert means of defence.

Letter of
Mr. de
Dénouville
on the
disorders of
the
colony.

territory and dominion of New England in America.” See Commission, N. Y. Col. Documents, iii., p. 537.

¹ His instructions required him to defend and protect the Iroquois if invaded by the French : N. Y. Col. Doc., iii., p. 548.