

Begon, Raudot's successor, he took up seriously the matter of fortifying and peopling the colony, where to his grief he beheld the number of inhabitants diminish, apparently, rather than increase.

1714.

"Canada," says he in a letter addressed this same year to the Count de Pontchartrain, "has only four thousand four hundred and forty-four inhabitants able to bear arms,¹ from the age of fourteen to sixty, and the twenty-eight companies (of Troops of the Marine Service maintained there by the King,) make in all only six hundred and twenty-eight soldiers. This small force is scattered over an extent of a hundred leagues. The English Colonies have sixty thousand men able to bear arms, and there is no doubt but that on the first rupture they will make a great effort to reduce Canada, if you reflect, that in the twenty-second article of the instructions given by the city of London to its members in the next parliament, they are required to demand from the ministers of the preceding administration, why Canada and the Island of Cape Breton were left in the hands of France."

Condition
of New
France.

As for the means of filling up the companies of the King's troops, de Vaudreuil thought there could be little difficulty after the great reform just accomplished in France. In regard to the increase of population, he felt that the following objections might be made: first, the scarcity of men in most of the provinces of the kingdom: second, the exhausted state of the finances, which forbade making any considerable advances to transport new settlers to America, and maintain them there till they could by their labor procure the necessaries of life. He met this difficulty by suggesting an expedient which seemed easy to him, notwithstanding these two obstacles. He proceeds in the letter just cited as follows:

"Every year there is a considerable number of salt-smugglers condemned to the galleys, for whom the King

¹ The total French population 6350 single females. Archives de was 18440; 2786 married men, 2588 l'Archevêché de Quebec, cited in married women; 6716 single males; Ferland, ii., p. 390 n.