

PREFACE TO VOL. LXIII

Following is a synopsis of the documents contained in this volume:

CLIV. Jacques Bigot writes an account of the Abenaki mission, for the period from Christmas, 1683 to October 6, 1684. It now has two branches—the old station at Sillery; and another, just begun on the Chaudière River, named for St. Francis de Sales. That saint has been chosen as the patron of the mission, and special devotions in his honor are held after Christmas. A full account of these is given, with a description of certain ornaments displayed on this occasion. Among them is a wampum belt of unusual size and beauty, which the savages themselves are presenting to the tomb of their patron saint. There is also a handsome picture of St. Francis, painted on satin; this is presented by the Jesuit superior, Beschefer. Bigot himself adds to it “a wide border of gold and Silver”—upon which he remarks to his correspondent: “I have even had—to tell you frankly—some scruple about the Expense that I have incurred for that, being so poor that I have not even means wherewith to obtain the food necessary for The support of our Mission, and chiefly of the most Wretched. But my scruple did not last long, Judging that, on an occasion so Important as That was, one must even retrench necessary expenses, in order to contribute Efficiently