

And still the brothers stood below, waiting in breathless anxiety for the end.

It came. The retreating army rallied and advanced once more across the azure battlefield. The other formed into a solid square and waited the attack. Faster and faster rushed the advancing host, fiercer and louder grew the shouts, but the south eastern wind waited, as silent and still as stone. Once more the heavens thrilled with the shock of the encounter—once more the battle raged, but only once. The serried square went down before the onslaught of the foe. The shouts of the victors and the groans of the vanquished mingled hideously. Then, suddenly and without warning, the combatants vanished, the sounds of the conflict died away, and on the unsullied blue not a trace of the struggle was left.

For several minutes neither Albrecht nor Bertrand uttered one word. They stood pondering in silence the fearful scene their eyes had witnessed, and gazing in awestruck wonder on the cloud framed space above, now fair, and blue, and silent, as the calm of a summer sea. But once again its peaceful aspect was dispelled. Across it, flowing swiftly, there appeared broad streams of blood—deepest and darkest where the phantom battle had raged most fiercely. Bertrand, shuddering and sickened, turned away, but Albrecht did not move. Suddenly, the crimson faded out of sight, the strange, unnatural brightness died away, the stars reappeared, and the heavy masses of cloud broke up and passed away. Nothing remained to tell of the strange vision they had seen; and when some minutes had gone by without further apparitions, they roused themselves and went on their way, half doubting the evidence of their senses, but still deeply impressed with vague forebodings of coming evil.

That night they said little, even to each other, of what they had seen, but morning brought strange tidings. Others besides themselves had seen the sights and heard the sounds of that dread battle in the sky. They had seen, and before the grave magistrates of Utrecht they told their story, swearing to its truth, and it was entered in the records of the town, attested solemnly by five independent witnesses. So Albrecht and his brother could no longer doubt that what they thought they saw, they really had seen. Why should they doubt? The story travelled fast; the noble and the learned of the land agreed in giving it credence, and in attaching to it a prophetic import. Only *what* did it mean? Who could interpret the vision? Not *one* Daniel, but many, came forward to display their magic lore. Not one, but many, asserted that it foretold disaster to the arms of Holland and danger to her liberty. Some went further, among them Albrecht van Hesselveldt. He held that the prediction was of some final and irretrievable catastrophe, which would end, at once and forever, the struggle with Spain.

Even Bertrand was depressed; he realized at last that victory was uncertain, and he feared that defeat was imminent.

"If only we had not seen the Spanish banners and heard their war-cries, I could hope," he said to Albrecht.

"But we *have* heard them," he returned. "All that remains for us is to sell our lives as dearly as we can!"

"By Heaven, we will!" cried Bertrand. "If we are doomed to die, we will die like men!"

"Yes! Fate has given us one little hour; let us make the most of it. Heaven but grant us

vengeance, if it be but for a moment, and then let us die. I can die *now*, Bertrand."

"I fancied that you, too, thought that the battle went against us," said Bertrand, sadly.

"Yes, in the end; but first, don't you remember? the victory is to be ours. They will go down before us! Think of that, Bertrand! We shall not die dishonored, after all. We are to be avenged on Spain, and then we can die!"

But the thought of vengeance did not completely reconcile Bertrand to the fate in store for Holland. Hitherto he had not despaired of the final triumph of liberty; now he did despair, and he could not sustain himself with the fierce comfort that supported his brother. The vision had been too clear, too explicit, to be disbelieved, and it was with a heavy heart that he said "Good-bye."

Not so, Albrecht. He had long anticipated the complete overthrow of the Dutch armies, but the previous gleam of success was an unlooked for merry. In fierce elation of spirit he went on his homeward way, willing to wait and to suffer for the coming hour of triumph, and after that to die. Vengeance was all that earth had now to offer, and, thank Heaven, it was not to be entirely withheld.

So they parted, both firmly believing in the reality of that strange nocturnal strife among the clouds, and agreeing as to its interpretation; but, to the one it came as a message of hope, to the other, as a sentence of despair.

Perhaps they erred in thinking that they saw it? Perhaps the phantoms merely mocked the ways of men in playful sport? Perhaps all had a meaning and they read it wrongly? Reader, you must form your own conclusions; but I beg you to remember that my tale is of a time, three hundred years ago, when the thoughts of men and (for aught I know) the ways of demons ran in different grooves from those of the nineteenth century.

"But," some critical reader may say, "do you actually ask us to believe in visions and omens and apparitions? Are not credulity and superstition the attributes of the vulgar? We cannot accept such a tissue of extravagance as you have set down for our perusal."

I didn't say you could, reader. All I assert is, that the truth of the story above recorded was not doubted in the days of the Van Hesselveldts. Nay, so far was it from being doubted, that the fulfilment of the vision was anxiously looked for, and in course of time was universally believed to have occurred.

(To be Continued.)

For The Household Companion.

### Makers of Our History.

Few of the men whose lives I propose to sketch in these columns were Canadians by birth; but as their discoveries and labors, mistakes and successes, have largely contributed to make Canada what she is, their histories ought to possess some interest for every inhabitant of this country. Taking them in chronological order, I will begin with

#### I. JACQUES CARTIER.

Little is known either of Cartier's earlier or of his later life; indeed, it is but for a brief period of less than ten years that his figure in any way stands out from amongst the crowd of bold, hardy mariners who played so important a part in the history of the sixteenth century.

He was born in the year 1494, at St. Malo, a seaport town on the coast of Brittany. Like many of his townspeople, he became a sailor, and must have gained considerable reputation in his profession, for when Philippe de Brion-

Chabot (a courtier, and the Admiral of France) persuaded the king to send an expedition to explore the northern part of the New World, the command was offered to Jacques Cartier.

He accepted the appointment, and two ships were fitted out accordingly. They sailed from St. Malo in April, 1534, steered for Newfoundland, passed through the Straits of Belle Isle, and crossed to the mainland of Canada, which Cartier claimed for his sovereign, by planting a cross in the soil, with the loyal inscription upon it: "Vive le Roy de France."

He imagined that he was on the highway to China, a delusion in which he did not stand alone, for, many years later, La Salle named the rapids of the St. Lawrence "à la Chine," fancying that they formed a direct communication by water with the rich empires of the East. Cartier dared not linger to pursue his discoveries, however, for the autumnal storms were gathering, and he returned to France without having accomplished anything remarkable. The next year three small vessels were placed under his command, and a number of gentlemen volunteers joined his little band. Before setting out they all confessed and heard mass in the Cathedral of St. Malo, and their enterprise was solemnly blessed by the bishop.

Cartier's first object was to explore the estuary of the St. Lawrence; and with no better pilots than two young Indians, whom he had treacherously kidnapped the year before, he made his way safely up the river past the Isle of Orleans to the Indian village of Stadaconé, at the foot of the huge rock now crowned by the fortifications of Quebec.

The savages were filled with wonder at their strange guests, but gave them a hearty welcome. The French captain and the chief, Donnacona, exchanged presents and visits of ceremony. But the Indians talked of another town higher up the river, so much larger and more important than their own that it gave its name, Hochelaga, to the great stream itself and to all the country round; and after hearing of it, Cartier would not be prevailed upon to remain longer with his kind entertainers.

Taking with him fifty sailors in a small galleon and two open boats, he sailed slowly up the river till his larger vessel grounded; and he was obliged to leave her, Travelling first in the boats, and for the last few miles on foot, he and his followers pressed on till they reached the Indian town, not far from the spot where Montreal now stands.

It was early in October, and fields of ripe maize surrounded Hochelaga, with its strange, oblong, bark-covered houses, each large enough to shelter many families, and its triple palisade of crossed tree-trunks, which enclosed and defended the whole town.

The Frenchmen were received here with no less enthusiasm than had been displayed at Stadaconé. The Indians brought out their sick that Cartier might touch and heal them. His character, like that of so many others of his time, seems to have been a strange compound of unscrupulousness and superstition, mingled with a genuine anxiety for the conversion of the heathen. To make amends for his want of medical skill, he read over the poor invalids a portion of the Gospel of St. John, made the sign of the cross, uttered a prayer for the welfare of their souls as well as of their bodies, and finally read, in his own tongue, the account of the death of the Saviour. The Indians listened with grave attention; then followed a distribution of presents, which they better understood; and, soon afterwards, the French bade them farewell and returned by land to Stadaconé, where in the meanwhile their comrades had built a fort of palisades.

In this poor defence against the severity of the climate they spent the winter. At first the Indians came to them daily, but gradually their friendship lessened, and by the beginning of December their visits had ceased entirely. The intruders now began to fear their active enmity, but another foe was at hand: A terrible outbreak of scurvy was brought on by their poor and scanty food, and at one time there were not more than three or four healthy men in the whole community.

In vain Cartier appealed to the saints, and ordered processions in honor of the Virgin; the disease did not abate, and many died in misery. They took great pains to conceal their condition from the Indians, lest they should take advantage of their weakness to destroy them; but perhaps if they had been more frank some lives might have been spared, for it was an Indian, at last, who told them of a remedy. "A decoction of the leaves of a certain evergreen would cure them," he said, and following his directions the survivors began to recover.

Cartier seems to have had very little gratitude in his nature; for when spring opened and he prepared to return to his native land, he basely requited the kindness and hospitality which had been shown him by treacherously luring several of the Indian chiefs on board his vessel and carrying them with him to France. There they were "converted" and baptized, but all, without exception, died within a year or two.

Nearly five years passed before Jacques Cartier made his third voyage to New France, under the auspices of a new patron, the Sieur de Roberval, to whom the king had given the high-sounding but empty titles of Viceroy and Lieutenant-General over all the newly-discovered regions where the sovereignty of France was but a name.

From the first, this third expedition was unfortunate. There was delay in providing sufficient stores and ammunition, and Cartier was ordered to sail alone. Roberval engaged to follow as soon as possible, but eleven months passed before he was able to do so. Meanwhile Cartier had no sooner reached his destination than he was beset by Indians inquiring for their absent chiefs. He admitted that Donnacona was dead, but declared that the others had married in France and were living there "like great lords"; but this falsehood did not satisfy their tribesmen, and they looked on the French with distrust.

It was already late in August, and Cartier continued his explorations till November. At Cap Rouge, where he built two forts, he found a valueless yellow mineral which he took for gold; but gained nothing more from his explorations except a little further knowledge of the country.

At Charlesbourg-Royal, as they called their two forts, the Frenchmen passed the winter, miserably and hopelessly, as we may guess, for as soon as spring opened they decided to return to France. On their way they met Roberval with two hundred colonists and the long-delayed supplies. He commanded them to return, but they escaped under cover of night, leaving the viceroy to make an attempt at colonization as ill-fated as their own.

Jacques Cartier was rewarded for his discoveries with a patent of nobility, but he appears to have retained to the last the simple habits of his earlier life, for his seigniorial mansion in the suburbs of St. Malo contained but four rooms, a kitchen and hall below, and two rooms above. In this unassuming luxury he probably lived for many years, but the actual date of his death is uncertain, though he is known to have been alive in 1552.