

friends were received with great joy—the men and boys screeching out welcome, and the squaws dancing knee-deep in the water.

But Cartier had heard that miles away up the mighty river lay a large Indian town called Hochelaga, the capital of a great country. Thither he wished to proceed, with his two young Indian guides as interpreters. He now laid up his two larger vessels in the St. Charles, and in his smallest vessel, the *Hermerillon*, he set sail again on the noble river. The *Hermerillon* grounded in Lake St. Peter, and from thence the party proceeded in small boats, till, on the second of October they approached the beautiful forest-crowned slopes of the hill below which lay the renowned Hochelaga. As they drew near the Indians thronged to the shore, dancing, singing, and shouting their rude welcome, offering ready gifts of fish and maize, in return for which they joyfully received beads and knives.

In the early dawn of the third of October Cartier landed with his men in all the splendor of full dress and martial accoutrement. They were met by an Indian chief, followed by a numerous train. The chief made them a long address in his own language, and received, with much satisfaction, the gifts of hatchets, knives, and a crucifix. Marching on a little way through the forest, they came out on the cleared fields of yellow, rustling maize that encircled the Indian town, of which nothing could be seen at first, but the protecting palisades.

In the middle of this town was an open square, about a stone's-throw in width, and here Cartier and his companions held a conference with the inhabitants, who swarmed out of their huts—men, women, and children—to survey and touch the mysterious strangers. But the “braves” called the village to order, sent the women and children indoors, and squatted round the French in rows. The ruling chief, a helpless, paralyzed old man, was carried out on a deer-skin, and laid down at Cartier's feet. He could only point to his powerless and shrivelled limbs, silently imploring from the white strangers the touch in which Indian superstition supposed a mysterious healing power to lie. Cartier willingly fulfilled the request, though we are not told whether it did any good; and the grateful old man gave him a fillet he wore in token of his thanks. A throng of sick, lame, infirm, and blind people then crowded about the French captain to share his healing touch.