

most desperate straits, and in the days of their greatest need for succour from the mother country the supplies of the colonists were repeatedly cut off by the English at sea, and the King's vessels were sunk or captured.

It is impossible to look at the records of the time without the deepest commiseration for the distress endured, and respect for the strength and fortitude displayed by those gallant French people under the most arduous and pitiful conditions. And yet, it must not be supposed the French in Canada yielded at any time without striking a blow in return at their enemies. Blows they struck in return, and in plenty, blows that sent their assailants staggering back to nurse their wounds and bury their dead, that reduced the surrounding Indian hostiles in the end to submission, and came very near at one breathless moment to snatching victory out of the very arms of defeat on that fateful thirteenth of September. If the English colonists carried destruction and death, over and over again, into the French territory and reduced whole settlements to smoking ruins, the French did the same on the English side of the borders and gave if anything more than they received.

Historical details to be found in every publication on the discovery of Canada need not be recapitulated here. It will be sufficient to look at results without dwelling at length on widely known incidents. Cartier's first attempt to winter on Canadian soil in 1535-36 was disastrous. It will be remembered that his expedition was not suitably equipped for below-zero conditions. Scurvy appeared and forty men of the ship's companies were down at one time between life and death; twenty-five perished outright, and of the remaining forty-five those who still retained their energies and faculties could be numbered on the fingers of one hand. They were forced to abandon one of the three small vessels in which they had made the voyage out, and in the spring the survivors retraced their way to France. Cartier's next expedition, in 1541, when he wintered at Cap Rouge, was equally unfortunate. The Indians, at first friendly, became hostile and withheld supplies. In the face of impending starvation,