

retire and in great danger of our lives. Our clothes were frozen on us and we could only move with difficulty, but at last we made so strong an attempt that we arrived at the shore, our canoe being all broken up. Each of us took our baggage and arms and marched in the direction of our habitation, without finding anything to eat for three days except crows and birds of prey, which are the last to leave these countries."

Fort Bourbon was reached at length. After reporting to his brother-in-law all that had passed, Groseilliers was not long in counselling what was best to be done. In his opinion the first thing necessary was to secure possession of young Gillam's ship. Time pressed and the spring would soon be upon them bringing with it the Indians. He argued that delay might prove fatal, inasmuch as Bridgar might at any moment learn of the presence of the New England interlopers; and in that event he would probably make an effort to capture their fort and add their forces to his own. If this were done, the success of the French in overpowering the English traders would be slight and their voyage would have been undertaken for nothing.

It was therefore agreed that Groseilliers should remain in charge of the fort, while his kinsman should immediately return to Nelson River. In a few days they parted once more, Radisson setting out with a fresh party and thoroughly resolved upon action. The first discovery he made, on arriving at the scene of his proposed operations, was that the Company's ship, the *Prince Rupert*, was frozen fast in the ice, and must inevitably perish when the spring floods came. He also speedily ascertained that the Governor, by no means relishing his presence in the vicinity, was already planning measures to thwart, if not to capture, his rivals, for he had sent out two sailors charged with the task of discovering the exact whereabouts of the French and the extent of their strength and equipment.

These two spies Radisson promptly captured—no difficult task indeed, for they had lost their way and were half-

frozen and almost famished. The anticipated fate of the *Prince Rupert* was not long delayed. The tidings shortly reached Radisson that she was a total wreck, and with it came also the news of the loss of her captain, the mate and four sailors. A subsequent report, however, declared that Gillman had escaped with his life.

Receiving this intelligence, Radisson presented himself before the Governor to see how he was affected by such a calamity.

He found Bridgar drinking heavily, but resolved to keep up appearances and to withhold from the French any knowledge of what had happened. He affected to believe the ship safe, merely observing that she had shifted her position a few leagues down the river. Radisson asserts that at this time the Company's factory was short of provisions. It is impossible that this could have been the case. The assertion was probably made to cover his own depredations on the stores of the Company.

Parting from the Governor, Radisson presented himself before Gillam the younger, to whom he did not as yet choose to say anything concerning his father and the loss of his ship. Under various pretences he induced Gillam to pay him a visit at Fort Bourbon. The latter does not seem at this time to have been aware of the intention of the French towards him. But he was soon to be undeceived.

"I remained quiet for a month," says Radisson, in the course of his extraordinary narrative, "treating young Gillam, my new guest, well and with all sorts of civilities, which he abused on several occasions. For having apparently perceived that we had not the strength I told him, he took the liberty of speaking of me in threatening terms behind my back, treating me as a pirate and saying that, in spite of me, he would trade in spring with the Indians. He had even the hardihood to strike one of my men which I pretended not to notice; but, having the insolence later when we were discussing the privileges of New England