

see the great religious ceremonial which celebrated the departure of the little fleet. And in the old cathedral were assembled the officers and men to hear mass, and to receive absolution and the paternal blessing of the bishop on their perilous enterprise. Three days later the flotilla set sail for the setting sun.

It was the fête of St. Lawrence when they entered the gulf, and Cartier bestowed that name on a small bay opposite the Isle of Anticosti, from whence it afterwards extended to the whole gulf and thence to the noble river, then called by Cartier the River of Hochelaga.

Piloted by the young Indians who had accompanied Cartier to France, they sailed up the St. Lawrence until they dropped anchor at last on the lee of a fair island, known now as the beautiful Island of Orleans, whose purple mass divides the river below the rock of Quebec. As the ships approached the shore and cast anchor, the Indians could be seen watching them with great interest and wonder. At first they seemed disposed to fly, but Cartier sent ashore his two young Indian pilots. Very soon curiosity overcame fear, and the red men's birch canoes were seen swarming about the ships.

Cartier's two young Indians could now speak French pretty well, and acted as interpreters. Next day their old chief Donnacona came in state to visit Cartier. He left ten canoes at a safe distance, and approaching the ships with two others he began a long oration, inquiring whether the strangers had come for peace or war. With the help of his interpreters, Cartier succeeded in reassuring him, and invited him into his cabin, where he regaled him before they parted, the old chief kissing Cartier's arm and placing it round his own neck, as the greatest mark of respect he could show him.

From this place Cartier sailed on till he reached the mouth of the St. Charles. Here the St. Lawrence became a mile wide strait. On one side were the wooded heights of Point Lévis; on the other, rising grand and sheer from the river, the great brown rock of Cape Diamond. Cartier moored his ships in the St. Charles, and Donnacona came with a train of five hundred Indians to welcome him to his village of Stadacona that nestled at the base of the mighty rock. At this village the French captain and his