

The broad Bay lay before them round as a shield, and glittering like a mirror as the mist blew off its surface. Behind the sunny slopes of Orleans, which the river encircled in its arms like a giant lover his fair mistress, rose the bold, dark crests of the Laurentides, lifting their bare summits far away along the course of the ancient river, leaving imagination to wander over the wild scenery in their midst—the woods, glens, and unknown lakes and rivers that lay hid far from human ken, or known only to rude savages, wild as the beasts of chase they hunted in those strange regions.

Across the broad valley of the St. Charles, covered with green fields and ripening harvests, and dotted with quaint old homesteads redolent with memories of Normandy and Brittany, rose a long mountain ridge, covered with primeval woods, on the slope of which rose the glittering spire of Charlebourg, once a dangerous outpost of civilization. The pastoral Laitet was seen mingling its waters with the St. Charles in a little bay that preserves the name of Jacques Cartier, who with his hardy companions spent their first winter in Canada on this spot, the guests of the hospitable Donacana, Lord of Quebec and of all the lands seen from its lofty cape.

Directly beneath the feet of the Governor on a broad strip of land that lay between the beach and the precipice, stood the many gabled palace of the Intendant, the most magnificent structure in New France. Its long front of eight hundred feet overlooked the royal terraces and gardens, and beyond these the quays and magazines where lay the ships of Bordeaux, St. Malo and Havre, unloading the merchandize and luxuries of France in exchange for the more rude but not less valuable products of the Colony.

Between the Palace and the Basseville the waves at high tide washed over a shingly beach where there were already the beginnings of a street. A few rude inns displayed the sign of the Fleur de Lys, or the imposing head of Louis XV. Round the doors of these inns in summer-time might always be found groups of loquacious Breton and Norman sailors in red caps and sashes, voyageurs and canoemen from the far west in half Indian costume, drinking Gascon wine and Norman cider or the still more potent liquors filled with the fires of the Antilles. The