

commerce and magnitude, and that many years had elapsed from the time of its foundation before any serious thoughts had been entertained of fortifying it. Indeed, during the most part of this period, the feelings of the Canadians—as we may now call them—and the firm confidence with which they had accustomed themselves to place in their own bravery and military skill, had taken so deep a root, that it was almost impossible to convince them of the necessity of enclosing the town with a formidable and durable defence.* They were certainly brave; but as they were not rich, it may be reasonably supposed, that their courage could be brought more readily into action in defence of their families and property, than their gold could be levied to defray the expence of a regular fortification. If this trait in the character of the ancient Canadians be true—and we have not the smallest reason to doubt it—it is certainly a circumstance highly honourable to their memory, and worthy of being preserved by their posterity as a piece of Spartan heroism unexampled in the history of the new world. But perceiving the growing importance of the place with its total exposure, the natural jealousy of the Iroquois prompted them to a degree of hatred that rendered their incursions not only more frequent but a great deal more artful and alarming. No bravery can withstand the cold and bloody intrigues of an Indian; and the people of Montréal became at last persuaded of the necessity of guarding themselves against the often meditated surprises of their enemies. The town was therefore ordered to be inclosed by the Chevalier de Calliers, brother to the celebrated Plenipotentiary of Ryswick. At first, and nearly for forty years afterwards, this barrier only consisted of slight palisades, surmounted by a bastion, and a defective redoubt built on a little hill in the centre of the town, which served as a bulwark, and which was terminated by a small square; but so simple a defence not promising to the town and its inhabitants that security which was so essentially necessary to their prosperity and happiness, it was afterwards encompassed with the more powerful safeguard of a very slender wall of masonry, sufficient only to overawe or prevent a surprise from the numerous tribes of Indians whose jealous attention had been drawn towards it. This wall, however, was fifteen feet high, with battlements, having six or seven gates large and small. The city thus enclosed and defended, the inhabitants soon began to pursue their different avocations with a spirit, a confidence and alacrity, which conveyed sanguine expectations of the future prosperity of the settlement. These expectations were not disappointed. The fur trade was the first the Europeans carried on in Canada. It was begun at the French colony at Tadousac, a port situated thirty leagues below Quebec. In process of time all this trade centered in Montréal. The skins were brought thither in canoes in the month of June. The number of Indians who resorted to this city increased, as the fame of the French spread further. The account of the reception they had met with, the sight of the things they had received in exchange for their goods, all contributed to increase this traffic. Whenever they returned with a fresh supply of furs, they always brought a new nation along with them. Thus a kind of fair was opened, to which the several tribes of the continent resorted. The fair was held annually from