

and many others, set out from Quebec on foot, with the design of making conquest of the three English forts at Rupert, Monsipi and Kichichouanne. They started on their journey in the month of March, carrying on their backs their canoes and provisions, and, after many trials, arrived before Monsipi on the 20th June. The French relater of the incidents of this perilous and fatiguing march says, "Il fallait être Canadien pour supporter les incommoditez d'une si longue traverse."

It would be too long for a magazine article to enter into all the details of this undertaking: it is sufficient to say that the English fort fell under the blows administered by the French Canadians, and that Troyes and D'Iberville, the commanders of the expedition, and indeed, all their compatriots, gained much éclat for the parts they played in the enterprise.

To judge of the magnitude of the undertaking, one has to take into account the rough and wooded country the French Canadians had to traverse, with but themselves to do the carrying of the boats, and provide commissariat for the successful accomplishment of their mission.

Having succeeded in taking the three forts to which I have referred, the French could well afford to lie on their oars for awhile, even though the Hudson Bay Company by the occupation of Fort Nelson should be enabled to diminish their catch of fish or deprive them of a goodly number of beaver skins, martin, loup marins or sea wolf, caribou and deer, and the skins of the many other wild animals which infested the woods and forests surrounding Hudson's Bay.

Here I may make a diversion, to make special allusion to the beaver or "castor," the national emblem of Canada. Of all the animals in the Northwest, the beaver was held in the greatest reverence—that was because of its capacity for hard work, perseverance and skill in building houses for themselves, and for the wonderful intelli-

gence they displayed in all their operations. Monsieur de Bacqueville de la Potherie, cousin of the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France in 1722, who accompanied the expedition to which I have referred, in one of his letters giving a detailed account of the voyage, also gives a detailed account of this animal, of its haunts, how it worked, felling trees for its winter hut, how it provided means of escape in case of flood or the burglarious action of other animals, and indeed, of all its qualities of architect, carpenter, joiner, mason and all other mechanical arts required in the construction of houses. Writing of the castor (beaver), he says: "Elle est si admirable que l'on reconnoit en lui l'autorité d'un maître absolu, et véritable caractère d'un Père de famille, et le génie d'un habile Architecte; aussi les sauvages disent que c'est un esprit et non pas un animal."

We will now return to Fort Nelson. This fort, the importance of which was recognized both by the French and English, we have seen fell into the hands of the English of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1687, and had since been under their control.

In 1694, the French and French Canadians having possessed themselves of the Forts Kichichouanne, Rupert and Monsipi, now turned their attention to the capturing of Fort Nelson. The King of France supplied the Quebec company with two vessels, the *Poli* and the *Salamander*, to lead an expedition for the recovery of this fort. D'Iberville was given the command, and proceeded to Quebec where he engaged one hundred and twenty French Canadians to go with him to Fort Nelson. He and his compatriots set out from Quebec on the eighth of August, and arrived before the fort on the twenty-fourth of September. D'Iberville besieged the fort for eight days, and then bombarded the fortifications for eight days. The garrison was not a very large one, only fifty-six men. On the 12th of October,