

DAWN OF CANADIAN HISTORY.

IN view of the hardships that were apparent in the distance, the Jesuits did not lose courage; but thought themselves of providing for the future. So they set themselves about building a shallop, while the others were reposeing by the fire at their ease, and doing nothing. They foresaw that without a boat they would be starved to death after the two months had expired during which their grain might last them. For without a boat they would be unable to go in search of acorns, or husks, or roots; neither could they fish, nor proceed to any place where there might be hope of procuring supplies; and all because the highways of these new lands were none else than the rivers and the sea.

At the beginning of this enterprise of building a sloop, they were laughed at, because the conductor of the work was their serving-boy, who knew no more about it than an apprentice. His assistants were two priests who had never worked at the business. "Nevertheless," said the companions, "Father Massé knows how to do everything, and in case of need he will be found a good sawyer of boards, a good caulker, and a good architect." "But Father Biard, of what use is he?" "As to that," another would say, "do you not know that when the sloop is built, he will give it his benediction?" Thus they chatted, and had plenty of leisure to do so before the fire. But the Jesuits lost no time in sawing planks, planing boards, searching for crooked timber to make ribs, fabricating oakum out of the bits of ropes they found, and running through the woods to gather rosin. Their industry had its reward, for in the middle of March their gallant sloop was in the water, equipped, and ready for sea, the admiration of those who had ridiculed it. While, on the other hand, the *Seur de Biencourt*, who, at the beginning of the winter, had had three good sloops, could not now put his hand on one of them, and was driven to the necessity of patching up, from the wreck of the three, a wretched bateau, holding at the most but three persons, and not capable of sailing nine consecutive miles without oversetting, because she shipped so much water.

Now, the sloop being ready, Father Biard sailed up the river, accompanied by a servant, and a third person who had joined himself to the Jesuits. They went on a search for roots and acorns. The roots for which they sought were called by the savages *chiqueti*, and were found near the oak-trees; they resembled truffles, but were bitter, and were found under the ground, interwoven the one with the other in the form of a chaplet. There was plenty of them in certain places, but on the other hand, there was hardly any place where the savages had not already made a search; thus but few were found, and those very small ones, and it was necessary to work hard to procure as many as would feed a person for a day. After having proceeded up the river seeking for these roots and for acorns, they went away to look for eplan. This eplan or eplian was a little fish, like the sardines of Rouen, which, coming from the sea, spawned in certain rivulets towards the beginning of April. The herring succeeded the eplan, and spawned after the same manner. Father Massé undertook to fish for herring, and afterwards for cod. The month of May had come, finding the Fathers labouring in this fashion, and dragging on a miserable life, until the ship should arrive from France, more of which anon.

They were raising in France an expedition to take away the Jesuits from Port Royal, and to found a new French settlement in a place still more suitable. The head of this expedition was Captain La Saussaye, who had thirty persons under his charge, counting the two Jesuits and their servant, whom he was to take up at Port Royal. These persons were to winter in the country. He had with him, in addition, two other Jesuits, Father Quantin, and Gilbert du Thet, but they were to return to France in case the two at Port Royal were not dead, a fact which was not doubted. The whole expedition, including the sailors, amounted to forty-eight persons. The Queen of France had been kind enough to contribute to the extent of four tents or pavilions belonging to the king, also some munitions of war; the Jesuit Simon to Maestro had given serious attention to all the freighting and victualling; and Gilbert du Thet, Jesuit coadjutor, a very industrious man, spared no exertions, so that the expedition was tolerably provided with all things for the wants of more than a year, besides the horses and she-goats which were set apart for the purpose of commencing housekeeping.

The expedition left Hanseur the 12th of March 1613, and the anchor touched bottom for the first time at Capo La Hué, in Acadia, on the 16th day of May. At Capo la Hué, Du Thet said mass, and erected a cross, affixing thereto as a sign, of taking possession in her name, the armorial bearings of Madame de Guercheville, proprietor, by a previous arrangement with the *Seur de Monts*, of the whole of Acadia. The company then re-embarked, and sailed for Port Royal. Here they found only five persons, namely, the two Jesuits, their servant, and Hebert, the apothecary, and another person. The *Seur de Biencourt* and his people were at a great distance, some here and some there. But as Hebert represented de Biencourt, they presented him with the Queen's letters, by which permission was given to release the Jesuits and permit them to go whithersoever they pleased. Thus the two Jesuits withdrew their goods in peace, and on this day, as well as the day following, they feasted Hebert and his companion in order that the arrival of the ship, as far as these two men were concerned, might not be a sorrowful one. And at their departure, however, lest Hebert and the other might be in want, the Jesuits left them a barrel of bread and some flagons of wine, so that the leaving-taking might be made as cheerful as possible.

Contrary winds detained the expedition five days at Port Royal, but a prosperous north-easter arising, they set sail, intending to proceed to the River Pentagoët, to a place called Kadequit, a spot fixed upon for the new settlement, and possessing great advantage. But Providence ordered otherwise, for when they were south-east of the Isle of Menano, the weather changed, and such a dense fog came down upon the sea that they no longer saw the day, neither the night. They were very apprehensive concerning this danger, because in this place there were a great many breakers and rocks, amongst which they were afraid of drifting in the gloom. The wind not permitting them to extricate themselves, nor to reach the open sea, they remained in this state two days and two nights, beating about all the time. The next evening God delivered them, for they began to see the stars, and in the morning the fog cleared away, and they found themselves opposite the Monts Deserts, an island which the savages called I emite. The pilot headed for the eastern part of the island, and lodged the ship in a spacious port, where the company made their devotions. They gave the port the name of St. Saviour. The place was situated on a pleasant elevation, rising gently from the sea, its sides washed by two springs. There were some twenty to twenty-five acres of ground, free of trees, in some places bearing grass almost as high as a man. The island faced towards the south and east, almost at the mouth of the River Pentagoët, where several pleasant, fish-abounding streams discharged themselves. The soil was black, fat and fertile; the port and harbour were more beautiful than could be seen anywhere, and situated to command all the coast. The harbour was as secure as a pond, there was no fleet which could not find anchorage within it, and no ship so large but could approach to a cable's length of the shore. The situation of the place was in the 41 degree of latitude, a position less northerly than that of Bourdeaux.

The company having landed upon this place, and having planted the cross, commenced to labour, and thereupon began their disputes. The cause of these bickerings was that their captain, La Saussaye, occupied himself in cultivating land, whilst the principal persons entreated him not to waste the time of his men at this labour, but to attend incessantly to the dwellings and fortifications, a course of policy he did not want to pursue. From this quarrel others arose, until the English restored concord, as will be seen further on in the narrative.

Virginia, called by the ancients *Morosa*, lay between Florida and New France. This country had first been discovered by Jean Verazan, who took possession of it in the name of Francis the First. But the English, having become acquainted with it in 1591 and 1595, had been inhabiting it seven or eight years previous to the event about to be described. Their principal settlement, which they called Jamestown, was distant by direct route about 250 leagues from St. Saviour, the place where the French had taken up their abode. Now, these English from Virginia were in the habit of coming every year to the Isles of Pencoët, twenty-five leagues from St. Saviour, in order to procure shell-fish for the winter. In making their usual voyage in the summer of 1613, it happened they were overtaken by fog and storms. This bad weather

lasted several days, and, in consequence, they were drifted, imperceptibly, much further to the north-east than they supposed, for they were good forty leagues advanced into New France, without knowing it, and near to St. Saviour, though they were not aware of the place.

OUR AUNTS.

WHAT would become of half of us if we had no aunts! I don't know precisely what would have become of a score of persons upon whom my mind's eye now rests; but generally, I am sure that but for their aunts they would have been in the race of life, by this time, nowhere. They would have fallen out of the course long ago and gone to the deuce, or died in ditches, as their other relatives metaphorically predicted of them.

It is a very old idea that aunts, and, I will add, uncles, are in some way designed by nature to be impartial third parties in life, to whom first and second parties may fly in time of distress and trouble. The French call their mutual friend the pawnbroker, *ma tante*. Englishmen call him their uncle. I think the French have adopted the true personification, and I cannot imagine how Englishmen originally made the mistake of calling their mutual friend in need their uncle. Compared to the true, kind-hearted, unselfish, unpretending aunt, our uncle is a blustering, ostentatious, purse-proud, vain old humbug. He is only kind to his nephews and nieces when it administers to his own vanity and his own importance. What trouble does he take for us? He only gives away his money because he has got more of it than he knows what to do with. It is the easiest thing in the world to give away money; but it is not an easy thing to give away love and sympathy, to give away ease and rest, to give away to others the love and care that you might keep for yourself. No, the uncle is a constituted sham and a humbug, and I shall seize an early opportunity to write an essay upon him, and take him down a peg.

Meanwhile, I will endeavour to discharge some part of my debt of gratitude—I can never discharge it all—to aunt.

I shall not be stating at all an exceptional case when I say that I had an aunt who was an "aunt dear" to three generations. This is one of the blessed things about our aunts. They are sent into the world to be good and also to live long. The good die early, sentimental folks say. Stuff! The good, thank Heaven! live to have false teeth and wear false hair, and they are the most delightful creatures to kiss in the world. I can only think of that dear old aunt of mine (though I never saw her until she was threescore: she was my grand-aunt) as a fair young creature of seventeen summers, with blue eyes, and flaxen hair streaming over her shoulders to her waist. I have this vision of her—though, when I knew her, she was wrinkled, and wore a brown wig that was anything but invisible, and a cap that some folks would call a fright—because she once told me that she was like that when, as a girl she ran over the hill one morning early to bid good-bye to her lover, who was going away to sea. She held me on her knee, and patted me on the head, and strained me to her breast, when she told me that story; and I knew that she had kept her great wealth of love for me and mine. For the sailor-boy never came back. She had a lock of his hair, which she used to take from a sacred drawer and show me. It was jet black, and when she handled it, it curled round her finger, as if the spirit of her sailor boy had come back from the depths of the sea to embrace her with all that was left of him on earth.

"And what did you do, aunt," I said, "when you heard the news?"

"What did I do, laddie? I crier and crier until my heart was dry and my eyn were sair. I think I should ha' deet if your mother hadna' come; but when she came I took up wi' her. She had bonny black een just like my laddie's, and I loved her and nursed her for his sake. And when they had ower mony o' them at home, I took her to live with me, and she was my lassie until your father married her. And then I was lonely again until your father had ower mony o' them, when I took your sister, and now I've got you; and a pretty handful I've had with the lot o' ye."

She did not mean these last sharp words a bit; for she took one of the succeeding generation to live with her, and it was always in danger of being smothered with kisses.

Ah, dear aunt in Heaven, what would have become of some of us but for you?