

THE STORY OF THE HURONS.

however, had ambitions beyond that of trading furs. From the Algonquins who came to Quebec to trade he learned of lakes and rivers beyond the rapids and he cherished the hope that by tracing back the interior waters to their source a western route to China, Japan and India might be discovered. His other great desires were to establish the power of France and to plant the Catholic faith in the wilderness of the new world.

The first winter in Quebec was severe enough to test the endurance of the most courageous. The little band of twenty-eight that remained with Champlain was reduced to eight by the following May. With the return of the supply boat from France in the spring, the way was open for exploration and discovery. An agreement entered into between Champlain and the chief of the Algonquins to assist them against their enemies, the Iroquois—a federation of five powerful nations living in fortified villages within the present State of New York—resulted in the discovery of the Richelieu River and the lake that bears the name of the great French leader. By thus joining forces with the