

ed the energy and ability of the masses throughout Europe. Influences by the spirit of mediæval chivalry, the founders of New France, those "gentlemen adventurers" performed many deeds of "bold enterprise." Canada and Acadia were cradled amid war and tumult. Their early history was one of conflicts, between the French and English, or between the French and Indians. It is not therefore wonderful that there should be so much of the dramatic or sensational element in the early annals of British America.

I have now briefly referred to those adventurers who, by their daring and energy, first led the way to the colonization of America. If it were properly within the scope of this article, I would like to follow them step by step in their perilous voyages across the ocean—to describe their heroic endurance in the face of the most formidable obstacles. The very vessels in which they sailed were mere clumsy hulks, with their quaint, high sterns—many of them not as large, and certainly not as safe, as the small coasters of the provinces. The "Squirrel" in which Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed was only fourteen tons burthen. The vessel which carried Champlain, the founder of New France, was only fifteen tons, and yet he crossed the treacherous Atlantic safely, passed the tempestuous headlands of Newfoundland, and glided deep into the heart of the Canadian wilderness. But all that I can endeavour to do in this part of my paper, is to sketch the outlines of the picture—my readers must be left to fill in the details themselves. True it is, that no pages of history are more attractive than those which describe the voyages of these maritime adventurers—their faith and their valour, their heroic lives and their often heroic deaths.

THE CAUSE OF THE PROSPERITY OF THESE COLONIES.

With the history of the progress of British America from poverty to wealth, since the commencement of the second era of its history, which dates from the fall of Louisbourg and Quebec, and the cession of Canada to England, it is not necessary that I should deal, since it has formed a fruitful theme in the press, on the platform, and in the Legislature, since the principal provinces have been consolidated into a Confederation. I must say, however, before proceeding to show the maritime progress of British America, that the fact of the British colonies on this continent having made such rapid strides in the elements of wealth and prosperity, must be attributed in a great measure to their having been allowed such freedom in the direction of their internal affairs, especially in their commerce. Up to the close of last century,—indeed up to a very few years ago,—the colonial policy of England was based on one dominant idea, that shipping should be encouraged at the expense of colonial interests. The possession of colonies was supposed to entail a demand for ships; therefore colonies must be fostered so as to make that demand as large as possible. At the commencement of the war of Independence, America would import nothing except in English ships; she could export nothing except to Scotland and to Ireland, nor could she import any commodities except from Great Britain. "The only use"—said an English statesman a