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French baptism in Montreal. On the scene where he was born were fired the first shots in defence of civilization and of our liberties as well. He learned to walk as our nation took its first steps towards autonomy.

Strange land this vast peninsula, bathed by the St. Lawrence on one side and the Richelieu on the other, coming to a head opposite Sorel and Berthier. In shape, it resembles a huge tongue and how many imperishable tales could it not tell! The Richelieu valley can boast a long line of great names! it fostered such admirable heroines as Marie Perrot, Madeleine de Verchères, Marie-Anne de Saint-Ours. It is the birthplace of such eminent Statesmen as Sir Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine, Sir Georges-Etienne Cartier, Honoré Mercier and Pierre Ménard, governor of Illinois.

Fortunate country! native land of Bourdage, Chénier, Ludger Duvernay. Richelieu! home of Eulalie Durocher who founded the religious order of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary! Thriving valley! Realm of *violinmakers* and of organ builders like Casavant Frères whose fame is international. Richelieu! Eden of our first virtuosi: Albani, Beatrice LaPalme, and Calixa Lavallée.

The Richelieu valley was long closed to the colonist. The Iroquois held it as their domain and considered sacred the transparent waters of the nearby river which they sailed up and down on their devastating raids.