

describe three scenes which show the varied features of Acadian life more than two hundred and fifty years ago.

Let us go back, in imagination, to a winter day in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The hills and valleys of the surrounding country are covered with snow, but the pines and spruce are green as ever. The water is frozen around the shore, but the tides still rush in and out of the spacious basin, and keep it comparatively free from the icy bonds which fetter the rivers and lakes of the interior. On an elevated point of land, near the head of the basin and by the side of a river, we see a small pile of wooden buildings, from whose chimneys rise light columns of smoke in the pure atmosphere, to speak of bounteous cheer and grateful warmth, but a very unpretentious pile of buildings to hold the fortunes of ambitious France on a wilderness continent! A quadrangle of rudely constructed buildings surrounds a courtyard, and comprises the stores, magazines and dwellings of the French. The defences are palisades, on which several cannon are mounted. Stumps peep up amidst the pure snow, and a log hut here and there tells us of some habitant more adventurous than the others. Above one of the loftiest roofs floats the banner of France.

When we think that these rude works are almost alone in the American wilderness, we can have some conception of the ambition and courage of the French pioneers. If we enter the spacious dining-hall, which is situated in one of the principal buildings of the quadrangle, we find a pleasant and novel scene. A huge fire of maple logs blazes on the large, hospitable hearth, and as the bell gives the summons for the noon-day dinner, we see a procession of some fifteen or sixteen gentlemen march gaily into the hall, and lay a goodly array of platters on the table. At the head is probably Champlain, the steward of the day, according to the rules of "*L'Ordre de Bon Temps*," with his

staff of office in his hand, and the collar of his office around his neck. Each guest bears a dish, perhaps venison, or fish or fowl, which has been provided by the caterer for the day. The faithful Acadian Sachems, old Memberton, and other chiefs and braves, sit squatted before the fire, and nod approvingly as they see this performance repeated day after day. A bounteous feast is enjoyed, and many witty jokes, songs and stories go around the board, for the company numbers men of courtly nurture, heroic daring and scholarly culture, who know well how to console themselves during their banishment to this Acadian wilderness.

The next scene is one often witnessed in the early times of French colonization. Wherever the French adventurer found himself, he never failed to show his Christian zeal. One of the first acts of Baron de Poutrincourt, after he had established himself at Port Royal, was to have old Memberton and the other Indians admitted within the pale of the Roman Catholic Church. On a fine June day the converts, to the number of twenty-one, assemble on the shore in front of Port Royal, and then follow the religious ceremonies under the directions of Priest La Flèche. The "gentlemen adventurers," the soldiers, the *habitans*, appear in all their finery. The rites are performed with all the pomp of that Church which, above all others, understands so well how to appeal to the senses of the masses. *A Te Deum* is sung, and the cannon send forth a volley in honor of the first baptism of the savages of Acadia. The Indians receive the names of the first nobility in France, and are rewarded by presents from the zealous Frenchmen, who were mightily pleased with their religious triumph. Similar scenes were often enacted in later times, at Hochelaga, on the Ottawa, by the western lakes and rivers, and on the border of the Gulf of Mexico.

The next episode is one of gloom and misfortune. On a bright summer's day, in 1613, a ship sailed up the basin, to the