

PIERRE ESPRIT RADISSON

blasted his reputation by his atrocious employment of Father de Lamberville as a decoy, at Onondaga, and by his dastardly seizure of the Iroquois envoys, wrote to France asking permission to offer fifty pistoles for the capture of Radisson. The request was granted by the King. Naturally, one asks, does not this stultify all that has been said about Radisson's secret commission? On the face of it, yes. But we are told that France had again reversed her policy toward England, for the reason that the house of Stuart was about to collapse. James II. was losing his hold on the English throne, and William of Orange was about to claim it. Civil war was imminent, and France, which had feared England a year or so before, was now anxious to fight in the open. Hence, to clear her skirts, France had to disown Radisson. The sacrifice of the poor backwoodsman was a trifle when such a stake was being played for.

Canada was worked up to a state of great excitement by the King's order, and echoes of that storm are still rumbling in the denunciations that have ever since been incessantly howled and shouted against the unfortunate Radisson. The first expedition that was planned to recover the territory, and, if possible to capture the traitor, was that of Lamartinière, who set out with two ships to scour the Bay.

On July 27, 1685, three English vessels, on one of which was Radisson, emerged from the ice of the Straits, and made for the shelter of Diggs Island to pass the night. Suddenly two foreign sails loomed up in the gloom, and the boom of cannon rolled over the waters. "It is Lamartinière," cried Radisson. Immediately every inch of canvas was set, and the English ships flew backward on their course. Only one of them was caught. Fourteen of her crew were bayoneted and flung into the sea, and the survivors were carried in their own ship as prisoners to Quebec. But Radisson had escaped.

Then Iberville and his brother, under de Troyes, with thirty-three Frenchmen and seventy Indians, started on snowshoes up the Ottawa to Lake Temiscamingue and Abbittibi, a