

and a Latin inscription, which I submit as a puzzle to any members of the Institute, who are curious in such things.*

There are not so many details of the discoveries in this direction, and they are not of as interesting a character. Although Tadousac was so long the most important station in Canada, it was not till 1647 that the French reached Lake St. John. In 1663 they had penetrated as far as Hudson's Bay. Tadousac was the principal site of the Indian trade, long after Quebec had become the capital of the colony, and some of the oldest missionary settlements are on the Saguenay. In Champlain's time, the island of Montreal seems almost to have vied with it as a trading place for the Indians, who followed the route of the Ottawa, and Champlain himself built a house near where the Victoria Bridge crosses, though the trading rendezvous seems to have been at the back of the island, on the Riviere des Prairies. But the Iroquois wars must have rendered such a station too insecure, as no town or fort was built there till 1641, and the Indians even from Lake Huron used to ascend the streams, which fall into the Ottawa from the North, and after a portage, used to descend the St. Maurice to Three Rivers, or the Saguenay to Tadousac. Even as late as 1670, Charlevoix tells us that there were rarely less than 1200 Indians to be seen encamped at Tadousac during the trading season; but the ravages of the small-pox amongst the Northern tribes about that period, put an end to the trade of Tadousac and Three Rivers. Some nations were no more heard of. They were exterminated, amalgamated with other tribes, or carried their furs to the English fort on Hudson's Bay. Montreal, which was now rising into importance, became the chief seat of the trade, and Tadousac was deserted.

In tracing the history of these discoveries, one cannot but be struck with the extraordinary rapidity with which the French spread themselves over the continent, as compared with the progress of the English. The commencement of the colony may date from the foundation of Quebec by Champlain in 1608, one year after the permanent establishment of the English at Jamestown, and one year before the discovery of the Hudson River, and twelve years before the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth. The colonies therefore commenced nearly on equal terms, yet within 8 years the French had reached Lake Huron, whilst it was nearly a century before the English had extended to any considerable distance from the sea coast. The Iroquois wars now broke out, which for many years confined the French almost entirely to the Lower St. Lawrence, but no sooner were they brought to

* *Hic in quam supersedimus in hoc ita editione ne doctiores veniant Romani et tollant nostram gentem propinante ad nauseam Baccho.*