

# LABRADOR

## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

By W. S. WALLACE

LABRADOR has not much history. So far as we know, it was first seen by European eyes in 986. From that time until about 1700 it almost enjoyed the happiness of the country which has no history. There is nothing to record but the voyages of navigators who came and saw the land, and sailed away. Labrador, said Jacques Cartier, was "the land God gave to Cain"; there was "not one cart-load of earth on the whole of it." No one came to live on the coast until about 1700. But if the history of Labrador is deficient in quantity, it is marked by an infinite variety. Across the stage there pass in succession the savage bands of the Eskimos, an earlier race than ours; the storm-driven "dragons" of the Vikings; the early navigators, Venetian, Portuguese, English; whalers and fishermen from the Basque Provinces, from France, from the west of England; French-Canadian *seigneurs* and *concessionnaires* along the *Côte du Nord*; English settlers after 1763 above the Strait of Belle Isle (among them

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