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CHAMPLAIN'S AMERICAN EXPERIENCES IN 1613

The early explorers of America did a marvelous amount of work in their days of strenuous living, and of many we fortunately possess complete and vivid histories. Champlain is one of these, and as he himself wrote his own commentaries, we have a finely-drawn, clearly cut alto-relievo portrait of him in all but autobiographical form. The end of the civil and religious wars which died out in France, with the sixteenth century, set numerous Frenchmen a-roving, and among the soldiers who had to change their manner of life was Quarter-master Samuel Champlain, who had been on the side of the king and the pope in the Brittany struggles. There was sea-water in his breed; his ancestors were fisher-folk, and his uncle a sea-captain, who was engaged to take the last of the Spanish troops out of France homeward, and Champlain, not wishing to be idle, accepted an invitation to go along. So we find him making maps of the head-lands and harbors they passed, both on the way to Cadiz and on a voyage he forthwith undertook to the Spanish Main and to Mexico, where he sketched the New World animals, trees, fruits, and aborigines, and, with his drawings, sent to the King of France a detailed account of his interesting travels. This was a little after the time when Shakespeare wrote the *Tempest*, but the description he gives of the Bermuda waters shows what the mariners in the small ships of those days thought of the weather there, and such a description as his might have inspired the poet. "Bermuda," he says, "is a mountainous island, the approach to which is dreadful on account of the surrounding dangers, for it is almost always raining there, and it thunders so often that it seems as if heaven and earth would meet. The ambient ocean is tempestuous in the extreme, and the waves run mountains high." Does not this conjure up for us Prospero and Ariel, and the "still vex'd Bermuoths?"

As this is not meant to be a life of Champlain, it is in order merely to say that Henry IV. gave him a pension, and that with other people he became associated in voyages to Canada, which Jacques Cartier had visited long years before. But Champlain had not only Cartier's dash, but a tenacity of purpose and a thoroughness in his way of doing things which were all his own. And in his several voyages he completely explored the coasts of New England, Nova Scotia, and Gaspé, helped to settle Port Royal (now Annapolis), actually founded Quebec and