

bottom, and so sheltered from every wind that a cable is scarcely necessary for mooring."

But the real object of Count de Frontenac's visit was not merely to receive the "submissions" of the Indians, or exchange expressions of civility. His predecessor, M. de Courcelles, as well as the energetic Intendant, M. de Talon, had for some time been desirous of erecting at Cataragui an outpost fort, for the purpose of protecting the fur or peltry trade, then the great traffic of Canada, and also of acting as a check upon the always dangerous Iroquois. One of his last official acts had been to call a convention of these Indians, just then at peace with their European neighbours, and, by plausible representations, to procure their assent to the erection of the "fur dépôt with defences," which became Fort Frontenac. M. de Courcelles had already undertaken an exploring expedition to Cataragui in person, going all the way in a canoe, and landing at the spot now occupied by the City of Kingston. Of the place the memoir of his expedition says: "the Governor remarked at this place a stream bordered by fine land, where there is sufficient water to float a small bark. This remark will be of use hereafter." It is not likely that the writer could have realized how many a large bark was destined to float in that fine natural harbour!

It is said that this exploring expedition, with its attendant exposure and fatigue, so much injured the health of M. de Courcelles as to be the cause of his demanding his recall. But, on the arrival of his successor, de Frontenac, he strongly impressed upon him the importance of proceeding to erect the fort, and, as has just been described, Count de Frontenac, in July of the succeeding year, 1673, proceeded in state to Cataragui to inaugurate and superintend its erection.

On the fifteenth, the day after he landed, the fort was commenced. On the nineteenth it was finished; not a long period,

certainly, for the erection of a fortress, though it was long enough for that of the wooden stockades, whose walls were rounded pickets pierced by loopholes, which could not have stood for a moment the shock of modern artillery, though they formed a tolerable protection against the primitive weapons of Indian warfare. De Frontenac remained on the spot for eight days longer, probably amusing himself with hunting, fishing, and exploring the neighbourhood of what became his favourite fort, and in all probability, as was his wont, conciliating the Indians by mingling with them in their games, and even joining in their war-dances. On the twenty-seventh of July he set out on his return to Montreal, having thus laid the first foundation of the City of Kingston. The good city ought to hold her bi-centenary celebration this month.

But the man who is most prominently and closely connected with the early history of Fort Frontenac was its first commander, Robert Cavalier de la Salle, a young Norman from Rouen, whose eventful and hapless history is as interesting as that of any knight of chivalry. Brave, persistent, enthusiastic; endowed with indomitable firmness and inexhaustible perseverance; with a constitution—mental and physical—naturally strong and enduring, and hardened almost to iron by a ten years' discipline among the Jesuits; and with an imagination fired by the achievements of Cortes, Pizarro and Jacques Cartier; he was eager to distinguish himself by exploring hitherto unpenetrated wildernesses, and taking possession of them in the name of the King of France. His favourite idea of finding a north-west passage to China by the waters of the Ottawa or the upper lakes, is perpetuated in the name which his enemies are said to have sarcastically given to his trading-post of *La Chine*. Just about the time when Fort Frontenac was erected, the discovery of the Mississippi by Père Marquette and M. Joliet excited intense interest in Canada, from