

diate sphere of action. It is thus that, while the Sulpicians, in Montreal, were considered as unfavorable to the popular movements, the priests of the Seminary of Quebec were supposed to entertain views more in harmony with those of the liberal party, that is to say, down to the years 1832 and 1834, when the *bill des fabriques* and the 92 Resolutions inaugurated in Lower Canadian politics a more energetic, and, as one might say, a more violent course, which, in the end, led to the disastrous events of 1837 and 1838.

It is not, however, to be inferred that, at any time, the gentlemen of the Seminary were mixed up, directly or indirectly, with any political move; on the contrary, they have always been most remarkable for carefully avoiding any worldly intrigue. Had they been otherwise inclined, another circumstance would have placed additional power at their command. Since the disruption of the Chapter of the cathedral, the bishops of Quebec have always been inmates of the Seminary, and it was only under Archbishop Signay, in 1847, that a new palace, being erected, there was again a separate establishment, and a kind of Chapter collected around the archbishop, although not under that canonical name. Far from taking advantage of arrangements which subsisted for more than a century, to promote the interests of their Order, by having bishops appointed from among their own body, several superiors of the Seminary, and among them the celebrated Jérôme Demers, are known to have declined the episcopal throne and dignity.

I have just spoken of the Chapter which was instituted by Mgr. de Laval. It was another source of trouble to the pious prelate, whose arduous mission seemed to have been vowed to every kind of obstacle and mishaps. When Bishop of Pétrée, he had been named Bishop of Quebec by Clément XIV, under a *bulle* or instrument dated 1st October, 1674, with power to create a Chapter composed of twelve Canons, an Archdeacon, a Dean, and other dignitaries. It was only on the 6th of November, 1684, that he gave effect to that permission. The following gentlemen were the first members of the Chapter: Mr. Henri de Bernières, *Dean* (the young man who had come with him and had been since ordained a priest), Mr. Ango des Mauzerets, *Archdeacon*; Mr. Chs. de Glandelet, *Prebend of Theologians*, and MM. Soumande, Pinguet, Buisson, de la Colombière, Levallet, Delcuze, and Germain Morin, *Canons*. The last named was the first native of Canada who had been ordained a priest.

Through some obstacles that were thrown in their way, and on account of an exaggerated opinion they had formed of the difficulties of their new position, the Canons, who were at the same time entrusted with the care of the parish of *Notre Dame de Québec*, resigned this latter function, and, by reason of this and of other difficulties occurring in his vast diocese, the bishop went back to France for a third time. Although, at our present day, the fact of one man crossing the ocean seven times in his life may be of very common occurrence, in those days we may fairly state that it was a proof of very great energy and activity.

Finding himself worn out by the cares that had belabored him and by the storms, both physical and moral, which he

had weathered, and believing, with that modesty which is never to be found but with men of the highest stamp, that another would be more able than himself to complete his great undertaking, he, himself, prayed for the appointment of a successor. Mgr. Jean Baptiste Chevrères de la Croix de Saint-Valier was appointed, and Mgr. de Laval, having returned to Canada, took his abode at his Seminary, where two most disheartening accidents were awaiting him. On the 15th of November, 1701, while the priests and their pupils were spending a holiday at the farm of Saint Michael, near the river Cap-Rouge, a fire broke out in the Seminary, about two o'clock in the afternoon. It lasted till night, and the whole building was destroyed. The bishop, being ill, had to be carried away in a hurry from the burning halls of an institution which he had created with so much labour, and which must have been so dear to him. The professors, together with their illustrious leader, took refuge in the Jesuits' College, and, immediately, Mgr. de Laval wrote to France to obtain relief, and speedily set to work to rebuild his Seminary. After four years, it was nearly completed, and the classes had been re-opened, when, on the first of October, 1705, another fire broke out, through the carelessness of the workmen. This time, however, a portion of the building was saved. The Jesuits' College was again resorted to, and, with undaunted courage and perseverance, the old, infirm, and sadly-tryed prelate, assisted by the zeal of his successor, again undertook to put up that which was a *fourth building*, if we take into account the temporary wooden one erected previous to 1688. He, again, went successfully through the new ordeal; and when God was pleased to reward his long and heroic labors, by calling him to Heaven, he could see the Seminary of Quebec again in operation.

There is no doubt that one of his greatest causes of anxiety, in his last hours, must have been the fear that new disasters should, again, visit his favourite undertaking. But his confidence in Providence was so great and so undisturbed, that it must, in a great measure, have allayed the feelings which would, otherwise, have overcome his mind.

From his death, however, the Seminary, having paid the tribute of mishaps and accidents which seems to be owned by every great undertaking at its outset, became every day more and more prosperous.

It was on the 6th of May, 1708, that this great benefactor of Canada left this world, at the advanced age of 85 years and seven months.

I need not attempt to describe the feelings of the population, who looked up to him as their leader and their father in everything. His mortal remains were taken to all the churches of the city, a religious ceremony being performed in each of them, in the presence of crowds of people, and they were finally buried in the cathedral. Two orations were delivered: one on the burial day, and another some time after, by Mr. de la Colombière.

One of the chief characteristics of Mgr. de Laval was his great fortitude of mind and noble simplicity of manners. A few circumstances are related by his biographers which will stand evidence of both those qualities. When he was carried away from the Seminary, at the moment of the first