

PIERRE ESPRIT RADISSON

tions if his demand was not granted. France could not afford a war with England just then, and consequently Radisson was again summoned by the Ministers and told that France had relinquished all claim to the Hudson Bay country, and that he was to return thither and hand back to the English all the property he had seized; forts, furs, and ships. But he was to do it secretly, for the French Government did not want the world to know anything about the surrender of their claim to the country. Would they give him a written commission to that effect? No; he had gone to Hudson Bay on the first occasion with only verbal instructions and he could do so again. But Radisson was stubborn, and finally wrung the commission from them, with the understanding, however, that he was to say nothing about it.

This latter story is so novel, so stage-like, and so apparently constructed to clear Radisson's character at any cost, that it can not be accepted without proof. Miss Laut produces something to substantiate what she says. She informs us that she "spent six months in London on records whose dust had not been disturbed since they were written in the sixteen hundreds. The herculean labor of this task," she continues, "can best be understood when it is realized that these records are not open to the public, and it is impossible to have an assistant to do the copying. The transcripts had to be done by myself, and revised by an assistant at night."

The paper which she presents is an affidavit made by Radisson himself before Sir Robert Jeffrey, on August 23, 1697, and left with the English Commissioners of Claims against France two years afterwards, namely June 5, 1699. It was thus a State paper.

After giving an account of some of the previous voyages, the deponent says that:

"in the year 1683 he came from Canada to Paris by order of Monsr. Colbert, who soon after died. And the deponent being at Paris had been several times with the Marquis de Seignelay and Monsr. Callière (one of the Plenipotentiaries at