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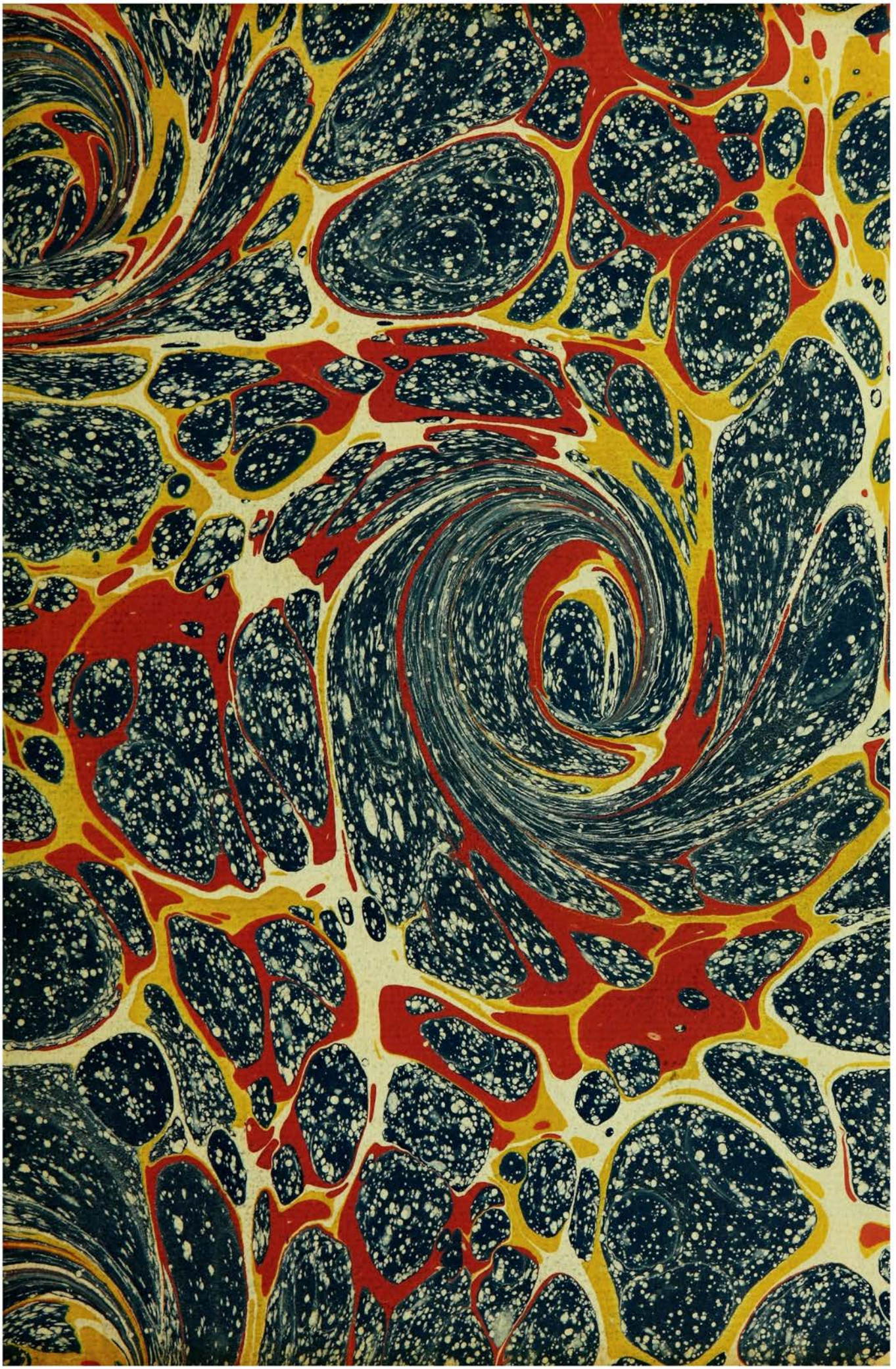

THE VOYAGES
OF
JACQUES CARTIER

From the St. Malo Portrait

JACQUES CARTIER

THE VOYAGES

OF

JACQUES CARTIER

IN PROSE AND VERSE

SONNETS BY S. C. SWIFT

PROSE SKETCHES BY T. G. MARQUIS

QUATERCENTENARY EDITION

THOMAS ALLEN
TORONTO
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"He told them of the river
whose mighty current gave
Its freshness, for a hundred leagues,
to Ocean's briny wave;
He told them of the glorious scene presented
to his sight,
What time he rear'd the cross and crown
on Hochelaga's height,
And of the fortress cliff that keeps
of Canada the key,
And they welcomed back Jacques Cartier
from his perils over sea."

From *Jacques Cartier* by
THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE.

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INVOCATION

Canadian history had its beginning when Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) navigated the Gulf of St. Lawrence, vainly searching for an opening into the continent of North America, by which he hoped to reach India or Cathay. He visited Newfoundland, the Magdalen Islands, the Miramichi River, and the Bay of Chaleur, and finally landed on the coast of Gaspé. Other mariners had been before him,—Denis of Honfleur, Giovanni Verrazano, and a host of fishermen, but they had touched merely at the bleak Atlantic shores, or penetrated rivers only for trade. Cartier, by his exploratory voyage of 1534, substantiated the claim of Francis I to the northern part of North America. He claimed for France a region immeasurably vaster than France itself, and was to return on two later occasions to make good his claim. Not only was he the first explorer of the St. Lawrence, but he was the first to attempt settlement on the banks of the river and the first to cultivate the soil, growing, in 1541, in his little acre-and-a-half garden at Cap Rouge, cabbages, turnips, and other vegetables. Thus Cartier not only was the first to thoroughly explore the Gulf and the lower St. Lawrence, but rightly can be called the first Canadian farmer, superseding by nearly one hundred years Louis Hébert, who is usually called the first Canadian farmer. All honour to Cartier! The father of Canadian history; the forerunner of a host of hardy adventurers and nation builders.

INVOCATION

O Canada, thou grander, nobler thing
Than fat lands wide a-sprawl at fertile ease!
Thou art a hope, a faith inspired that sees
Full-fruited autumn from the seeded spring;
Thou art a song that happy thousands sing,
An anthem blent of freedom's melodies;
Thou art a spirit of high destinies,
A people's soul that death can never sting.

Oh, gift me with the power to tell the tale,
In worthy words, of thy heroic past,
From that great day when Cartier's eager sail,
After long search, brought him to thee at last
To where thou layest asleep on Gaspé's shore—
His loud hail waked thee then to sleep no more.

FIRST VOYAGE
1534

April 20, 1534, was a red-letter day in the history of St. Malo. The substantial seaport town was in a state of excitement. On the granite ramparts crowds of sight-seers had assembled and over the "Sillon," the six hundred and fifty foot causeway that joined the island on which St. Malo stands with the mainland, men, women and children were rushing to see Jacques Cartier, the most renowned sailor in France, and his hardy crews, set out for the New Found Land,—not for fish and furs, but to seek a passage through the continent of America to the land of Prester John and the Grand Khan. For the leadership of this national enterprise, undertaken through jealousy of the work of Spanish and English navigators, Sir Charles de Moüy of La Mailleraye, Vice-Admiral of France, had chosen Cartier, the "Mariner of St. Malo," and supplied him with two ships, each manned by sixty-one men. Vessels had long been sailing from St. Malo for distant ports in Europe and Africa and for the fisheries of the North Atlantic, attracting but little attention; but on this day all hearts were stirred, a new undertaking that might bring great glory to France and St. Malo was on foot. As the little ships weighed anchor, the cannon on the ramparts and on the great towers of the principal gates thundered a God-speed, and the enthusiastic crowd shouted themselves hoarse as the sails were thrown out and the adventurous vessels forged their way into the English Channel, and then shaped their course for the New World.

UP ANCHOR!

(St. Malo, April 20, 1534)

Up anchor! lads, break out the rustling sails!
The spring sea gaily laughs, the wind pipes fair;
It whistles us to bold adventures where
The luring west yon dim horizon veils.
Up anchor! lads. Is there one heart that quails?
There's naught a Breton sailor dares not dare:
To him the snake-haired gorgon's baleful glare
Were but a theme for doting old wives' tales.

Up anchor! lads. A chanty now! Heave ho!
Our sweethearts yonder smile farewell through tears.
God bless their loyal souls, they'll hourly pray
The Holy Virgin that brave gales may blow
Us safely back. Give them three parting cheers ;
Up anchor, then, up anchor and away!

Propitious spring breezes wafted the two French vessels across the Atlantic. They were headed for the island of Newfoundland, a region that had already been well charted and was known to every fisherman in Europe. Cartier's first objective was Castle Gulf (the Strait of Belle Isle), the northern entrance to the great waters that lead to the heart of what is now the Dominion of Canada. As the ships approached the bleak coast, they found their advance blocked by vast fields of ice. It was necessary to seek shelter in a convenient harbour. Such a harbour was discovered. Fifteen years before, in 1519, Cartier had been married to Catherine des Granches, daughter of Jacques des Granches, the constable of St. Malo. To his wife he was devotedly attached and in her honour he named this sheltering harbour St. Catherine. Here he rested from the tenth of May, and about the first of June sailed northward. But ice still retarded his progress, and it was not until June the ninth that he was able to sail triumphantly through the Strait of Belle Isle. Fishermen were already on the ground, and as he voyaged westward, skirting the barren shores of Labrador, so sterile and unproductive that he said of it: "I think this is the land that God gave to Cain," he met a large ship from La Rochelle, bent on fishing and trading with the natives, its captain and crew having no thought of India or Cathay, the regions uppermost in the minds of Cartier and his men.

ST. CATHERINE'S HAVEN

(May 11, 1534)

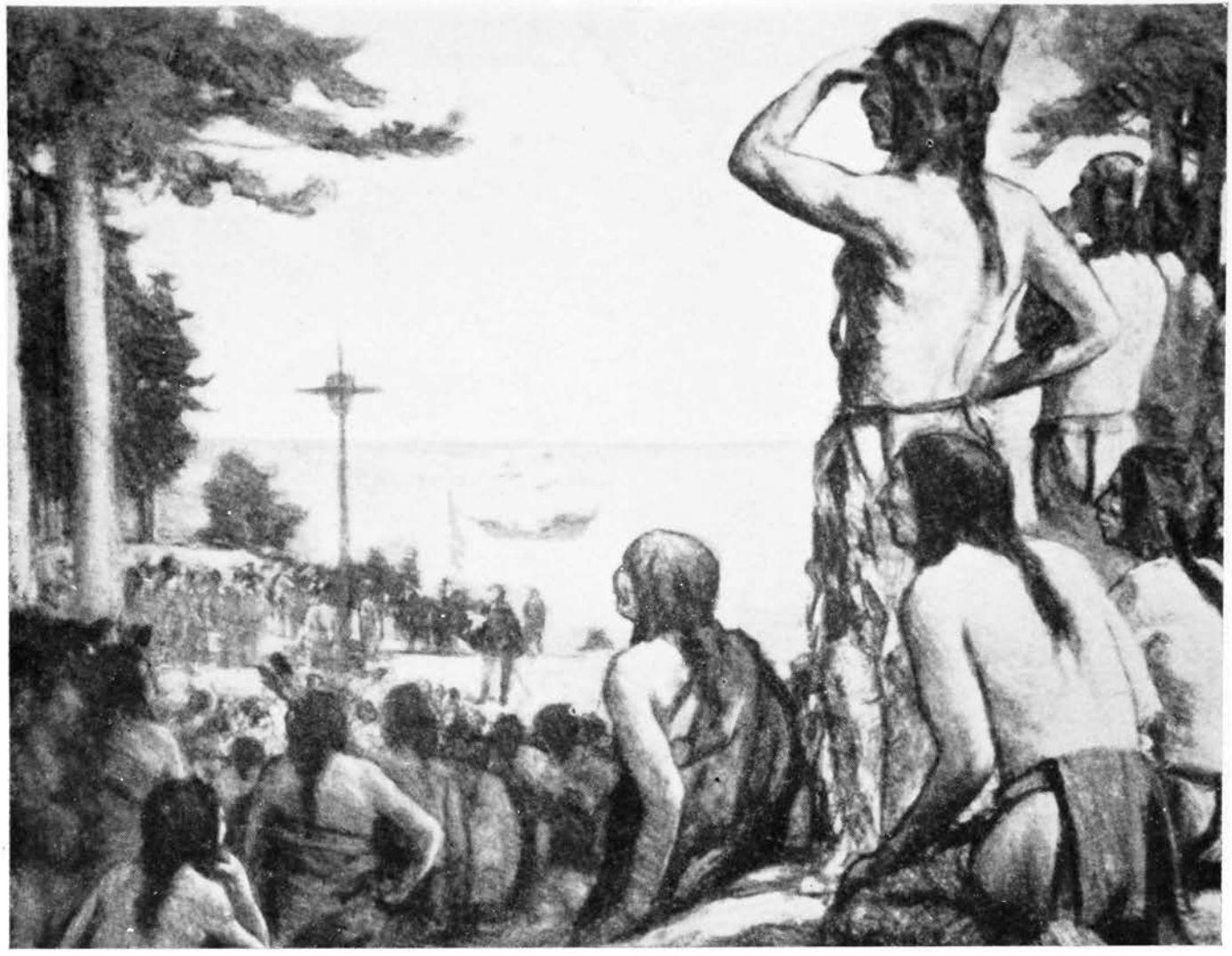
At anchor in this tranquil bay I'll ride
Till wind and wave have torn the icy rind
From these stern shores, in whose cold heart I find
But room for one warm, sunny spot to hide.
'Tis like the smile that I have ever spied
Upon my Kate's glad lips as she hath twined
Her arms about me, when our Lady kind
Hath brought me back from voyaging to her side:

That tender smile! My home-light's welcome cheer;
That close embrace! my harbour safe apart,
Where I might happy moor with love alone;
Sweet Kate, thy guiding prayers have brought me here,
And this fair port, loved pilot of my heart,
Shall ever as St. Catherine's Hav'n be known.

As Cartier was feeling his way westward, he hit upon the present bay of Gaspé. He now paused in his journey, and in the presence of a large concourse of Indians, assembled here for the mackerel fishing, erected a cross, thirty feet high, on which was a shield (escutcheon) in relief with three *fleurs-de-lis,* above which was cut in large letters:

VIVE LE ROY DE FRANCE.

By this act he laid claim to the territory he had so far explored and to the mighty region that was opening up to his gaze. The cross foreshadowed the theocracy that in years to come was to be established on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Before it the voyagers "joined hands and knelt in adoration," while the Indians looked on in silent wonder, little thinking that this was the initial act that was to deprive them of their vast hunting-grounds. At this spot ninety-five years later the first naval battle in North America was to be fought. Here Captain David Kirke defeated and destroyed the fleet of Charles de Roquemont. Here 380 years later a mighty armada assembled, an armada vastly stronger in men and ships than the Spanish Armada. France was being hard pressed, and this armada, bearing 33,000 Canadian soldiers, was destined to play an essential part in saving France from utter destruction. On this fleet were many descendants of the French pioneers of the land claimed by Jacques Cartier for France. Thus humble Gaspé Bay was to prove a notable link between France and Canada, and Jacques Cartier's heroic efforts for the spread of French dominion were not in vain.



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CARTIER AT GASPÉ, 1534

I

CARTIER AT GASPÉ

(July 24, 1534)

Hark, oh ye proud, time-fronting cliffs, give ear!
Ye headlong waves, your turmoil cease, be still!
Ye thronging woods, that on the charméd sill
Of this land's portal, all a-tiptoe peer
At our strange rites, be silent now and hear!
And ye, poor folk, whose speech lacks every skill
To measure forth the savage voids that fill
Your souls' dark spaces, listen ye, and fear!

This lofty cross that we on high have raised
To Christ is sacred, God's beloved son,
Who for the sins of men was crucified;
And this fair shield with golden lilies blazed
The emblem is of France's king, whom none
Hath ere surpassed in regal power and pride.

As the Frenchmen knelt in reverential attitude about the cross, the natives viewed the ceremony with misgivings. They but vaguely grasped its significance, and dread was in their hearts that these armed white men, who had visited their country in their winged canoes, were laying claim to the region watered by the Gulf of St. Lawrence. As Cartier and his crews re-embarked, a chief, with several other Indians, pushed off from the shore in their light canoe, and resting on their paddles, harangued the mariners at some length. They disputed the right of the French to erect a cross, which they looked upon as a symbol of authority, without their permission. Cartier replied in soothing words; but by strategy some of the sailors boarded the canoe and forced its occupants on board Cartier's ship. Cartier now assured the chief that the cross had been planted merely as a mark denoting the entrance to the harbour, to which he intended to return. By fair words and kindly acts he won the friendship of the chief and his companions and succeeded in persuading two of the chief's sons to stay with him, their father little thinking that they were to be taken to France as conclusive proof of the important discoveries made in the New World. Then, after the Indians had been given trifling gifts, mainly hatchets and cheap knives, the anchors were lifted, and the two little vessels sailed westward towards the setting sun.

II

CARTIER AT GASPÉ

Where'er this cross be set, all men, as we,
Shall bend the knee to Christ, the King of Heaven,
Else be their souls to Hell's fierce torments given
That shall not bate through all eternity.
Where'er these gleaming lilies planted be,
Their roots shall never from that soil be riven;
But rebel weeds shall ruthless thence be driven,
Till these royal flowers hold proud supremacy.

The cross is reared, the lilies planted fair:
Thrice blessed people, happy shores, rejoice!
For ended is your age of ignorance.
To Christ your Saviour homage bring in prayer,
And to your earthly liege cry with loud voice,
"Long live our King, the glorious King of France!"

So far Cartier had been navigating the Gulf of St. Lawrence; he was now approaching the entrance to the great river itself. Soon, on his right, loomed up a large island, with rugged, storm-beaten shores. As he crept along within sight of its southern shore, a fierce wind came out of the north-east. He had not come prepared to winter in the New World and, having learned from fishermen that in the autumn the Atlantic winds churned the waters of the gulf into tumultuous seas, he decided to turn about and hasten back to St. Malo. The entrance to the great river of Hochelaga (the St. Lawrence), of which the Indians had given him a detailed account, was almost in sight, and though he was convinced that by following it his dream would be realized and that he would find India and Cathay, he cast anchor and after holding a solemn mass set the prows of his vessels towards France. It was now the first week in August, and east winds were already sweeping in from the ocean. For days the ships were storm-tossed off the coast of treacherous Anticosti, and then beating northward they made their way to the Strait of Belle Isle. They had accomplished little. Vast forests and fertile lands they had seen, but no rich cities or mines of gold, silver, or precious stones. On September 5 the brave little ships with their gallant crews arrived at St. Malo. Cartier hastened to Court to report his discovery and win permission to make a more ambitious voyage in the following year.

CARTIER AT ANTICOSTI

(August 15, 1534)

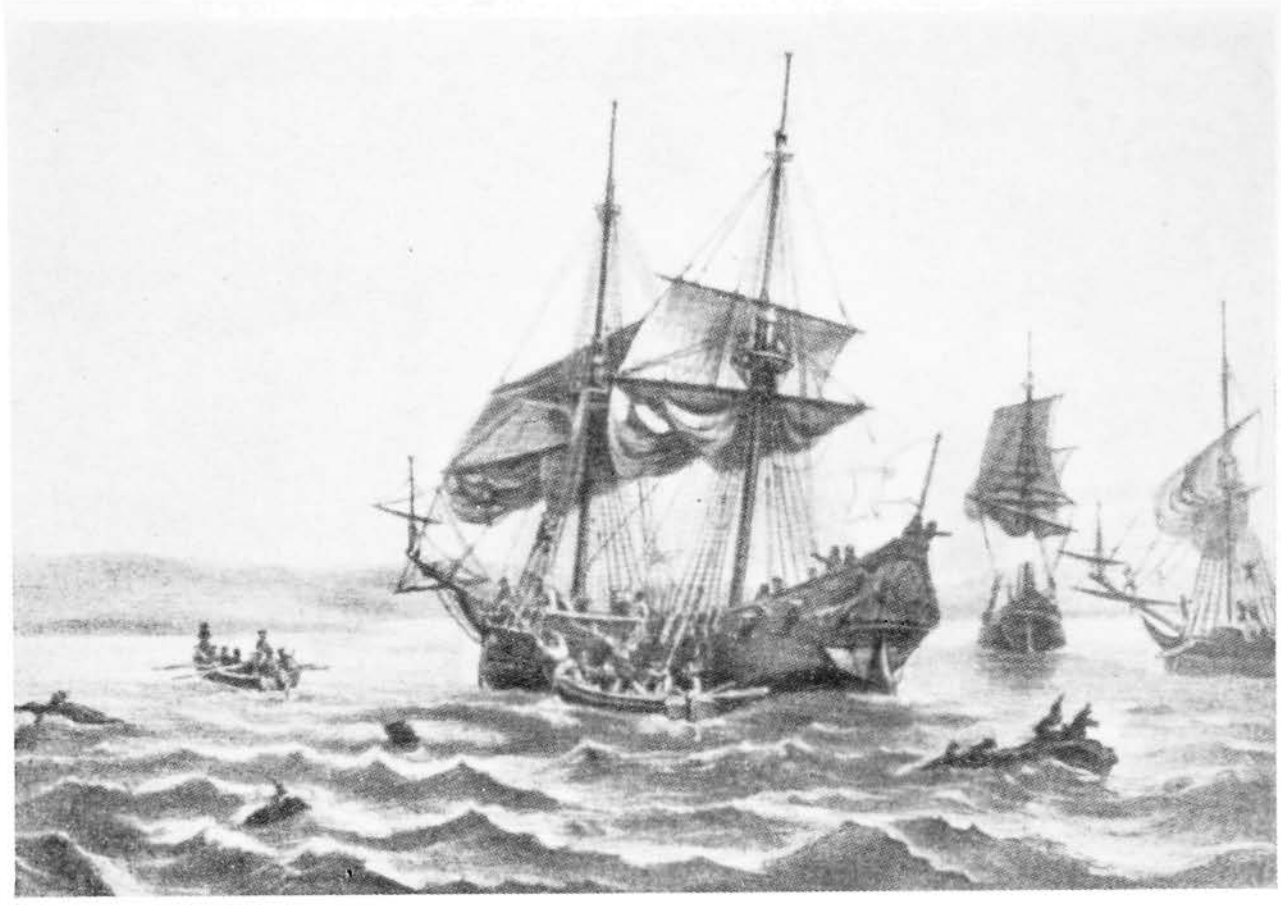
Roar on, thou spiteful wind! Thou canst not scare
With noise of fiendish menace, wild and hoarse.
Rage on, thou curséd current, with the force
Of an infernal, frothing fury! Tear
From weak anchorage my vessels! Bear
Them hurtling hence! Think ye to end my course?
By heaven, no! Success shall yet endorse
My dream, and justify my faith, I swear.

From this green island's furthest verge I see
With joy a boundless westward-stretching main;
Hope shouts to me above the storm: "That way,
That way, O captain, must thy sailing be
If thou would'st glory win!" Ay,
That way lies Inde the Golden, and Cathay.

SECOND VOYAGE

1535-1536

In October, 1534, a second expedition to the New World was planned by France. Once more Jacques Cartier was in command. Jealous traders in St. Malo opposed the enterprise, but by May, 1535, all opposition was overcome, and three vessels were ready for the great adventure. On this occasion a number of gentlemen of high birth were enrolled. The fleet consisted of *La Grande Hermine,* of one hundred and six tons, *La Petite Hermine,* of sixty tons, and the *Emerillon,* a galleon of forty tons. After a tempestuous voyage, the Strait of Belle Isle was reached, and thence they swept westward past Anticosti Island, called by Cartier "Assumption," and on into the St. Lawrence, the Hochelaga of the Indians. Guided by Taignoagny and Domagaya, the young Indians taken to France the previous year, the vessels at length cast anchor in the narrow channel between the Island of Orleans and the mainland. The trees on this island were festooned with grapevines, on account of which Cartier named it the Isle of Bacchus. The explorers then visited the Indian village of Stadacona, clustered about the great brown rock of Quebec. The Indians gave them a friendly welcome, and the chief, Donnacona, wished them to stay with him, but Westward Ho! was Cartier's cry. He had learned of a populous walled town, Hochelaga, some days' journey to the west, and thinking it to be the entrance to the rich east decided to proceed thither without delay. Leaving his large ships in the St. Charles, called by him the Ste. Croix, with a number of the most trustworthy of his men, he set out for Hochelaga in the galleon *Emerillon* accompanied by two of his ships' boats.



Grande Hermine Petite Hermine Emerillon

THE SHIPS OF CARTIER

THE ISLE OF BACCHUS

(September 7. 1535)

Ye thirsty Breton mariners, what ho!
Look not so glum, let not your courage sink!
Think ye that jolly Bacchus cannot blink
His roguish eye save yon in St. Malo?
Pardi! mes braves, wherever grapes do grow
In every bunch the god hath hid a wink,
A laugh that lurks upon the genial brink
Of mirth to follow when the wine doth flow.

And this fair isle of grapes hath endless store,
That do but need the press of merry feet
To make the rich wine glow with ruddy smile:
'Tis fitting, then, such happy vineyard bore
The name of him who sour life maketh sweet;
What say ye, lads! We'll call it Bacchus Isle.

With high hope in his heart that before him lay the road to Cathay Cartier ascended the river of Hochelaga. He was entranced with the scene that opened on his gaze. For days the *Emerillon* swept inland, past thickly wooded banks clothed with stately walnut trees, oaks, elms, cedar, spruce, ash, birch, maple and willow, and ever and anon the men observed grapevines loaded with bunches of fruit that reminded them of sunny France. The river was alive with wild fowl,—cranes and swans, ducks and geese. Along the shore plover and kingfishers flashed in the mid-day sun. When the men landed during this leisurely voyage the woods and meadows seemed to them alive with birds,—partridge, blackbirds, thrushes, goldfinches, and many species of sparrows. Occasionally they caught the notes of the woodland songsters. As night drew on mellow music fluted over the water from song sparrows, vesper sparrows and thrushes. One bird, from a tall tree-top, poured forth a flood of music such as the nightingale of the woods of France delights in. To them it was a nightingale. However, it was probably the brown thrush, a common bird along the St. Lawrence. As they approached Hochelaga the river grew shallow and treacherous and so, abandoning the *Emerillon,* they continued their journey in the boats. In a way they were sorry this river voyage was drawing to an end. The beauty and richness of the country had ensnared their souls.

THE NIGHTINGALE

(September, 1535)

Hush! Pontbriand; be silent! Pommeraye.
Did you not hear it? Listen then. Ah, there!
'Tis hid in yonder vine-meshed bush I'll swear,—
Peace, Poullet, peace! You chatter like a jay;
You'll frighten her; be quiet now, I say!—
Who could have thought this wild land's savage air
Would thrill to such sweet echoes of our fair,
Far France? O, bird divine, cease not your lay!

Ah, yes. 'tis she, the love-lorn nightingale;
No fancy is it of my homesick heart
That cries aloud to-night for Brittany:
At her dear song my yearning thoughts set sail
From this vast waste, and homeward swiftly dart;
Borne onward by the winds of memory.

I

THE HEALING TOUCH

(October 3, 1535)

My friends! my friends! what cause for tears is here!
Now could I weep, nor feel my manhood less.
Look where on yon stretched skin, as on a bier
They bring their shrivelled chief for me to bless,
And cure him of his years and helplessness,
As tho' I were a God for Age to fear,
And backward down the trodden pathway press
Till once again Youth greet him with a cheer!

Ah, would I were a wonder-working saint,
Whose holy word such trust should crown with truth,
And life's dim flicker blow to ruddy flame:
But mine own faith, alas, is all too faint,
To feel the quickening power of Christ's sweet ruth—
I dare not call upon His healing name!

Cartier, according to the journal of his voyage, read to the assembled savages "The Gospel of St. John, namely *In Principio*" (In the beginning, etc.), made over the sick the sign of the cross, and prayed God to lead them from darkness to light and to prepare them to receive Christianity and Baptism. "Then the Captain, for a couple of hours, read to them the Passion of Our Saviour." They could not understand the words, but as Cartier read and prayed he occasionally fixed his eyes on the heavens. The Indians seemed to think that he was appealing to the great Manitou of the upper world to come to their aid, and they reverently imitated his actions. A historic scene this! enacted on a spot where as the years rolled on was to grow up the greatest city of the Dominion of Canada. The forerunner of a thousand other like scenes later to be enacted among the villages of the Hurons, the Neutrals, and the Tobacco Nation of the Georgian Bay region, the Abnaki of the east, and the savage Iroquois of what is now northern New York State. It foreshadowed the methods to be adopted by later comers from France. They arrived, it is true, with swords at their sides and muskets in their hands, but they ever held aloft the cross, their religious orders seeking vainly to persuade the savages to forego their brutal ways and become true followers of the gentle Jesus.

II

THE HEALING TOUCH

And yet—and yet—what says the Holy Book?
"The works I do, them shall ye also do,
Yea, greater works than these, if ye but look
In faith to me, nor doubt that I am true."
And do I doubt? Would God that I but knew!
For here's a challenge that no doubt will brook:
Hope flings a gage to Faith in public view,
Nor suffers proof to skulk in privy nook.

O Christ the compassionate, help my need,
Reach down to earth again. Oh, take my hand!
Give it Thy healing touch, Jesus, I pray.
Sweet Mother of God, do thou for me plead!
Thee can He not refuse, helpless I stand:
Oh, Lord of pity, have pity to-day!

The women of Hochelaga enthusiastically welcomed the Frenchmen. To satisfy themselves that they were real beings, they crowded about Cartier and his men and timidly stroked their beards, faces and limbs. Some of the women had infants in their arms, the warriors of the future. These they held aloft seeking to have the white men, to them celestial beings, touch their children, no doubt believing that the spirit of these strange manitous would influence the future of those they touched. Cartier grew weary of these demonstrations in his honour and made ready for his departure from Hochelaga, but before doing so he had the Hochelaga men seated in one row and the women and children in another. To the leading men he distributed hatchets and to the women beads. Among the dusky, black-eyed naked children he cast tin rings and small tin images of the *Agnus Dei,* and there was a wild scramble for these prized trifles. This done, he ordered the trumpets to be sounded, and as the strident notes re-echoed through the surrounding forest his followers formed up and marched to the portal of the town, intending to return to their boats. But the women followed them as they departed, offering them gifts of "fish, soup, beans and other things." When the Frenchmen reached the open space in front of Hochelaga they were met by several Indians who offered to lead them to the top of Mount Royal. Cartier accepted the offer, and began the ascent of the forest-clad slope and after an arduous climb reached the top,—the first white man to scale the now historic height.

AN INDIAN MOTHER TO HER CHILD

(Hochelaga, October 3, 1535)

Be still, my little brave, your wailing cease!
The white-skinned manitous will hear your cry,
And it is said, if them a boy displease
With weak girl's tear or sob, and they pass by,
A blasting flash darts from each frowning eye:
Forever afterwards from shadow flees
His timid foot, his faint heart fears to die:
A coward in war, he is despised in peace.

But he who looks to them with dauntless mien,
On him they smile—perchance they touch his head.
Forever then, that happy, blessed child,
Need fear no arrow from a foe unseen;
He walks the forest with a victor's tread—
See, see! my son, on you the Gods have smiled!

When the top of Mount Royal was reached Cartier was entranced with the scene. At its base nestled the town of Hochelaga, surrounded by its fields of golden maize and patches of pumpkins gleaming in the autumn sun. Far to the east and west, north and south, stretched a seemingly endless expanse of forest with giant trees taller than the tallest mast. Through the gleaming morning mist loomed up the blue Laurentians to the north and, in the distance, towards the southeast, other mountains not less beautiful and majestic. Soon Cartier's eyes became fixed on the river that swept out of the west towards Hochelaga. As he gazed he caught glimses of a leaping, tumbling stretch of water, to be known later as the Lachine Rapids. He now learned that beyond it were placid stretches of river interrupted by more rapids, and still farther to the west that there were vast inland lakes which led to a great sea (Lake Superior), which he concluded must be the Pacific Ocean. He learned that another mighty river, brown in hue, swept out of the north and emptied into the blue St. Lawrence a short distance west of the Lachine Rapids. The vastness of the country, the richness of the soil that could produce such luxuriant vegetation held him spellbound. Surely in some of its far reaches, gold, silver, and precious stones, that would reward him for all he had endured, would be found.

I

CARTIER ON MOUNT ROYAL

(October 3, 1535)

Thou great new world, how wondrous fair thou art,
How worthy to be won for noble France
And worn, a flashing jewel, upon her heart!
From this royal mount o'er thine unfenced expanse
Of tossing woods, a sea of leaves, my glance
Sweeps ever on, a ship without a chart,
A buccaneer in quest of golden chance
Where mysteries hide, where hopes illusive start!

And thou, O mighty flood, whence comest thou?
What ocean of sweet waters mothers thee?
Thine awful secret tell—oh, tell to me
What thou must one day show the fearless prow
Which first shall dare to brave the mystery
That bids me stand nor further venture now!

While Cartier brooded over these things, some of the natives pointed to his silver whistle and the case of his dagger, made of a golden-coloured metal, and intimated that to the west and north there were similar metals. He showed them some copper, and they declared that such a mineral was not uncommon in the country of Saguenay, a vague region, skirted by the River of the North (the Ottawa), on its way to join the St. Lawrence. He now saw possibilities of the realization of his wildest dreams. By following river and lake he would reach the Pacific Ocean and Cathay and India, and by exploring the river stretches he would, no doubt, discover the precious metals that would bring wealth to himself and his followers and swell the treasury of Francis I. But it was late in the season and these things must wait, and so, reluctantly tearing himself away from the glorious scene spread before his eyes, he with his men and their Indian guides slowly descended Mount Royal and made ready to board their boats. But they were weary after their arduous work in ascending and descending the rough sides of the mountain. The worshipping Indians seeing this were moved to pity and "made horses of themselves" and carried them back to their waiting boats. The natives were loath to see them go. They urged the Frenchmen to return speedily, and as the boat crews bent to their oars, hastening to reach the *Emerillon,* a number of sturdy Hochelagans followed them along the river until they were lost to view. On October 4 the *Emerillon* was reached; sails were hoisted, and the little galleon sped eastward and on October 11 arrived at the Ste. Croix, where they found that fortifications had been erected as a protection against the natives who were far from friendly.

II

CARTIER ON MOUNT ROYAL

Ah no, 'tis not for me to feel the thrill
Of knowledge ultimate of thy far source!
My cup the steady hand of fate doth fill
With this brimmed draught of bitter-sweet remorse—
The Moses cup that but strong souls have force
To wholly drain—that from a lonely hill
I view the promised goal of hope's bright course
And feel the cold despair of failure chill.

But oh! what prophet's vision meets my eye!
A teeming city, wide-spread, mazed with streets;
A noble port, and tall and gallant fleets
That hence and hither a rich commerce ply—
Good God! my soul leaps up with joy and greets
This greater answer to my prayer's great cry.

On Cartier's return to the Ste. Croix, Donnacona and his chief warriors hailed him with seeming joy and entertained him at a "grand *fête*," but, as he was soon to learn, this friendship was merely assumed. At first the natives visited the ships and the fort bringing eels and other fish and receiving in exchange "knives, beads, and other trifles, which pleased them very much." But as winter approached the attitude of the Indians became less friendly, and fearing attack Cartier had the fort strengthened and careful night watches set. When the rivers became glittering sheets of ice and the land was buried under a mantle of deep snow, the followers of Cartier, accustomed to the mild climate of France, viewed the long winter ahead of them with dread. On account of the growing unfriendliness of the Indians they were forced to keep to the narrow limits of their ships and fort, occasionally venturing forth in armed bodies to trade with the treacherous savages. Conditions developed that soon made them consider it the part of wisdom to avoid all contact with the Indians. In December it was discovered that death was stalking through the wigwams at Stadacona. Cartier forbade his men to visit the place and would not allow the Indians to enter his snowbound fort. But the disease, scurvy, could not be avoided, and soon some members of his little band were down with it. Strong and weak alike were affected, and Cartier was at a loss how to cope with this "unknown and mysterious epidemic," and apparently the Indians, judging from the havoc wrought among them by the fell destroyer, were equally helpless in its presence.

SICKNESS

(1535-1536)

I

WINTER

Deep lay the universal snow. The sun,
In dazzling splendour robbed of warmth and cheer,
But made the white expanse more waste and drear.
So that within our shivering ships, to shun
The solitude, we fled and there we won
Brief respite from our loneliness, till fear
Of stealthy Redmen, ever prowling near,
Again would drive us forth with pike and gun.

Thus passed the frozen days. And then, at last,
Awful calamity upon us fell,
With all the terror of a scorching blast
From out the mouth of sudden-opened Hell:
A foul disease from which there was no flight
Upon us cast its noisome, withering blight.

According to the account of the plague given in the story of Cartier's second voyage, probably written by the Mariner of St. Malo himself: "The sick lost flesh, and their legs became swollen, muscles contracted and as black as coal; covered with blisters. Then the disease affected the hips, thighs, and shoulders, arms and necks. In each instance the mouth was so diseased that the flesh fell off, even to the roots of the teeth, and nearly all the teeth fell out." A direful scourge, mysterious in its origin and admitting of no cure known to Cartier. Meanwhile the Indians were suspiciously prowling about the French encampment. Through the dreary winter weeks a careful watch was kept by those strong enough to crawl to the walls of the little fort, and in each of the four watches of the night the trumpet of the guard challengingly blared out, making the still winter woods resound with its notes. At times the savages stealthily approached the ice-bound ships. On such occasions resourceful Jacques Cartier had his men pound the hulls of the vessels "with sticks and stones as if caulking were being done." Fortunately for the disease-smitten crews their leader, who night and day watched over his men, tending the sick and giving the last rites to the dying, escaped the epidemic. He never lost heart, and his hopeful spirit was a tremendous force in inspiring hope in those who were in the grip of the scurvy.

II

SCURVY

Swollen limbs, shrivelled sinews, rotting jaws,
A stench of death exhaled ere life has fled;
Hoarse voices sullen muttering 'gainst the pause
That bars enrolment with the happy dead;
Dumb fury at the secret hidden cause
Of torturing pain, of never-ceasing dread
That saps firm faith and dauntless courage gnaws
And makes of arching heaven a vault of lead.

We dare not let the watchful savage know
Our sore distress nor guess our tale of sick:
The dead we hide within the silent snow—
No torch we light, no spade we wield, nor pick!
And still the horrid scourge . . . the fear grows worse,
And lips that once would smile have learned to curse.

The winter was a severe one. From the middle of November until the middle of April the ships "were continuously shut in by the ice, which was more than two fathoms thick." Storms raged, and the country was soon under a blanket of more than four feet of snow. Fierce winds swept about the Ste. Croix, and at times the snowdrifts were piled higher than the sides of the ships. The weather for the greater part of the time was bitterly cold, and the "drinkables were frozen in the casks." By the middle of February, eight of Cartier's men had died, and out of the company of over one hundred souls not ten were entirely free from the disease. The ground was frozen so hard that pick and shovel could make but little impression on it, and as deaths occurred the bodies were buried in the deep snows by their sorrowing comrades to await proper internment in the spring, if any should be left to bury them—a thing they began to doubt. Death, that had almost daily visited them, had taken all hope from their hearts. Never again would they see their beloved sunny France! Not so Cartier: hope never left him. All would yet be well. The good God would not desert him. He would find his way back to St. Malo even if he had to make the journey in the little *Emerillon* with the three or four sturdy members of his crews who were apparently impervious to the disease.

III

OUR PRAYER

Above the snow, high on a glooming pine,
Where all might see, we fixed Her image fair:
The Queen of Heaven smiled upon us there
With pitying lips and tender brow benign,
Lit by the sun whose cold light seemed to shine
With softened radiance as our anguished prayer
For healing mercy rose to Her whose share
Of Godhead is Her Mother-love divine.

God, how we prayed! Like Christ on Olivet,
We saw Death's hideous face, O blasting dart,
And cried aloud in terror at the sight—
Each cry was like a drop of bloody sweat
Wrung from the very centre of our heart—
We prayed, . . . but Philip Rougemont died that night.

Cartier was a typical sailor of his time,—a man of dauntless courage who had long braved tempests in northern and southern seas. Like many of the mariners of that age he may have been a privateer captain, which was almost synonymous with pirate. But he was intensely religious withal and ever in times of storm and stress appealed to Heaven for aid. Never in his whole career had he been in such a trying situation. His feeble human strength was unable to cope with it, and so he sought the aid of God. When the plague was at its height he "made all pray, and caused an image of the Virgin Mary to be placed against a tree at a distance of an arrow's flight from our fort across the snow and ice." On the following Sunday, in the presence of this image a mass was celebrated. All who could leave the fort, "the well and the sick, marched in procession through the deep snow singing the seven psalms of David and the litany,"—the first solemn religious procession ever performed within the bounds of Canada. When the image was reached, they fell on their knees and prayed the Virgin to have "her child Jesus" pity them. Cartier furthermore made a solemn vow that: "If God should permit him to return to France he would make a pilgrimage to Notre Dame des Roquemadon." But on this same day, as Cartier pathetically relates, one of the sturdiest of his men, Philip Rougemont, "a native of Amboise, died at the age of twenty-two years."

IV

DESPAIR

Ah, yes, poor Philip died, and many more ;
And sweet Hope died, too fragile for the shock
Of vows unheard, unheeded, that did mock
With lasting pain unstilled, the ancient lore
Which teaches God will open wide His store
Of rich fulfilment, if its mystic lock
Be fitted with Faith's key, or one but knock
In prayer, believing, at its golden door.

Hope died; and in her stead ruled fierce Despair,
Whose sullen heralds, Blasphemy and Hate,
Shriek curses hoarse at heaven and all its powers!
Oh, strange it was we were not smitten there
And left to perish in our rebel state—
But e'en the unjust feel God's blessed showers.

Heaven seemed unmindful of their sufferings. From day to day more men were smitten with the plague, and daily bodies were consigned to their snowy graves. Soon in all three ships "there were not three men well, and on one of the ships there was not a man well enough to go below to get water for himself or the others." Despite the dreadful situation Cartier did not give way to despair. During the winter twenty-five souls, "all good men," died. The plague was no respecter of persons, strong and weak alike succumbed under its malignant influence. The whole company with the exception of about fifty had been severely afflicted, and those who had escaped death were so weakened as to be of little service. Gloom, like a black mantle, had settled down on the little band of hardy voyagers, and they felt that never again would they see their homes and loved ones. When things were at their blackest, what seemed to be an answer to their prayers was vouchsafed them. Vigour was to be restored to their weakened limbs, hope was to grow strong in their fainting hearts. The Virgin, they thought, had evidently interceded for them, and a wilderness miracle was to be performed on their behalf. Death was still hanging like a grim shadow over their encampment; "but God," wrote Cartier in his narrative, "in His holy mercy had pity on us and gave us knowledge of a remedy and cure."

V

REVELATION

For lo, when all seemed lost and hell gaped wide
To gulp us down as Satan's rightful prey,
The Holy Virgin met us in the way
Of swift destruction, and led us aside
(O tender, sweet, forgiving heavenly guide!)
With gentle hands, to where salvation lay,
Before unseen, but now as clear as day,
And with new life death-worthy doubt did chide.

'Twas on this wise: One morn our captain saw
Chief Domagaya, sound and blithe as lark,
Though brief time since it seemed naught could him save
From that same death whose fang our life did gnaw:
He sought an answer to this riddle dark,
Which happy Domagaya gladly gave.

In the depth of winter Cartier visited Stadacona and saw Domagaya seemingly in the last stages of the disease. One of his knees was "swollen to the size of a child of two years; all his muscles contracted; his teeth had fallen out, and his jaws had been mortified and diseased." He expected daily to learn of his death; but one day several weeks later when walking outside the fort he met a band of Indians, and in their midst was Domagaya apparently completely restored to health. Here was a veritable miracle. He anxiously inquired how his cure had been effected. The young chief had been a sore trial to Cartier and had been plotting the destruction of the French. However, Domagaya, no doubt in joy at his recovery, so far laid aside his animosity as to tell Cartier the cause of his restoration to health. It was a simple remedy, and all during the winter had been within the reach of the sufferers. He related how he had taken "the juice and grounds of the leaves of a tree" and this had proved a sovereign cure for the malady. Cartier admitted that many of his men were sick, but was careful not to let Domagaya know how weakened his force was. He anxiously asked about the tree, and the young chief sent two women who were with the band to bring branches of it to Cartier. They came back bearing nine or ten branches and told the Frenchmen how "to take off the bark and leaves and put all to boil in water, then to drink it for two days and put the grounds on the swollen limbs. This they declared to be a cure for all sickness." The tree was known to them as the "aneda." It was a fir tree, a stately evergreen. If Domagaya were not deceiving them, the prayers they had offered up were about to be answered.

VI

ANEDA

"When time was new and men, still wondering, yearned
To know of life the all of joy and grief,
A maid, Aneda named, loved a young chief,
Within whose breast an answering passion burned.
But ere these two loves crowning bliss had learned,
This foul disease from which you seek relief
The warrior had seized and held in fief,
Till death's rude ransom he had fully earned.

"Aneda's heart was broken, but her soul
Lost not itself in sorrow's wilderness:
A great compassion moved her, and she prayed
The Gods would grant her power to make men whole
Of this dread plague, that hope fulfilled might bless
The common love of constant man and maid.

In haste Cartier followed Domagaya's directions. The leaves and bark of the fir tree were boiled in large pots. The sufferers eagerly drank the bitter liquid and almost immediately found relief. Healthy blood began to surge through their veins, their swollen limbs regained something of their old strength, and men who had been expecting death rose up and walked. At first some, fearing that the treacherous Domagaya was deceiving Cartier and that the supposed remedy was but a trick for their undoing, refused to drink the decoction, but when they saw how efficacious it was all were eager to partake of it. Seizing axes, those who had sufficient strength rushed to the woods and cutting down a fir tree as large as one of the oaks of France dragged it to the fort. In six days this tree had been stripped of bark and leaves and the liquid it produced consumed. The result was unbelievable. Of its potent influence Cartier quaintly remarked in his narrative: "Had all the doctors of Lourain and Montpellyer been present, with all the drugs of Alexandria, they could not have effected as much in a year, as this tree did in six days, for it was so beneficial that all those who were willing to use it were cured and recovered their health, thanks be to God." The cure had been effected opportunely. The Indians were assembling about the fort in large numbers under the leadership of Donnacona and Domagaya, with the evident intention of capturing the ships and destroying their crews.

VII

ANEDA

"Aneda prayed and cast her arms abroad
In love's appeal above her lover's grave.
The Manitou, in deep compassion, gave
Her instant heed; there on the mounted clod,
Within an eye's swift wink, a head's quick nod,
He wrought a wonder, for the maiden brave
Became a tree indued with power to save—
How mightily can love prevail with God!

"Her arms wide-spread full many a branch did grow,
Her wind-blown hair a leafage thick did give;
Her flesh became a bark rough-scaled, but kind,
Through which her blood, a healing sap, did flow,
That he who drank, though dying, yet should live;
Go seek Aneda, and you health will find!"

Cartier and his men, weary from the long winter and physically weakened from the effects af the scurvy, rejoiced when the warm winds of April told them that the season of snow and ice was at an end. Soon the ice in the St. Lawrence began to break up, and the blue water of the great river gladdened their eyes while the thoughts of all turned towards France. The frost king lost his grip on the Ste. Croix, and its calm waters tempted them at once to launch their little vessels and hoist sail. Swiftly the country was denuded of its blanket of snow, the brooks were in flood and sea fowl flew screaming about the shores; in the thickets an occasional early bird piped to them a song of resurrection, the eternal resurrection of spring. Their days were busy ones. Within the palisades that surrounded their ships hammer and saw resounded, and the boisterous voices of sailors rang out in the clear April air as the vessels were made ready for the homeward voyage. Their provisions were well-nigh exhausted, and their store of trading goods had been largely expended, but in the holds of the vessels there was a goodly supply of furs, the only tangible evidence that the costly voyage had not been wholly unsuccessful. Cartier was loath to return to France; the route to China and India was still undiscovered, and he had no precious stones or valuable minerals to bring back to his king and his patrons. But the glimpse he had had of the great river flowing from the west towards Mount Royal convinced him that by that highway he would yet achieve success. Once more he would return to the St. Lawrence to finish his uncompleted projects.

SPRING ON THE ST. CROIX

(1536)

Bright, happy, teasing spring is here again!
With merry shout she waked the world to-day,
And sang into his ear a roundelay
Which made him skip and dance with might and main,
His snowy night-cap thick, in gay disdain,
He's snatched from off his head and flung away:
It's fall'n upon a mountain old and gray—
There let it bide while Summer rules the plain.

Like lads let loose from school in frolic glee,
The waters of Ste. Croix with whoop and rush
Their shattered icy bonds toss here and yon;
A jolly crow laughs loud the game to see,
A madcap wind shrill whistles through each bush—
"Be glad!" cries Spring, "be glad! sad Winter's gone."

When Cartier decided to return to St. Malo he found that he had not sufficient men to man his three vessels, and so he reluctantly concluded to leave one of them behind. *La Petite Hermine* was to be abandoned, and Cartier and his followers would sail homeward in *La Grande Hermine* and the little *Emerillon.* At a point near the mouth of the brook St. Michel the vessel that had weathered a hundred Atlantic storms was run ashore at high tide. She was then dismantled and left to her fate, to prove a treasure trove to the Indians who extracted nails and bolts from her upper works. For three hundred and seven years the little craft rested in her wilderness grave; her hull rotted away, but a portion of it became gradually embedded in mud, and when found was "bitumenized and black as ebony." A part of this find was stored in the government building in Quebec, but this was unfortunately destroyed in a disastrous fire that burned the Parliament Buildings. Another part was fittingly sent to St. Malo, where from the timbers "a trophy in the form of a pyramid was erected," and this was adorned with bolts and blocks from the abandoned vessel. On one of the timbers were carved the words:

A LA MEMORIE DE JACQUES CARTIER ET DES BRAVES MARINES, SES COMPANGNONS

and beneath: *Debris du navire "La Petite Hermine" de St. Malo, que Jacques Cartier fut contraint d'abandonner au Canada en avril,* 1536. Thus was immortalized this little forerunner of a myriad vessels that have sailed the waters of the river St. Lawrence.

LA PETITE HERMINE ABANDONED

(May, 1536)

Brave little ship, farewell, farewell! No more
Thy forward-straining sails shall feel the push
And urge of wild, tumultuous winds that rush
In headlong riot, boisterous uproar,
O'er unpathed seas. No more 'twixt shore and shore
Thy battling prow shall know the spout and gush
Of rammèd surges scattered 'neath the crush,
Like hill-tops shattered by the stroke of Thor.

Sweet little ship, forgive me! Oh, 'tis not
Of mine own will that I do leave thee here
Alone to die, thine end unknown, unseen:
'Tis Fate has cast this harsh and unkind lot . . . .
But though thou perish, ne'er shall disappear
From history's page thy name, Petite Hermine.

While preparations were being made for the departure the Indians of Stadacona were proving inimical. Great numbers had assembled in the village, and reports came to the French that nightly councils of warriors were being held in the cabins of Donnacona. They occasionally crossed the Ste. Croix to the north shore and hung about the French fort and ships, but Cartier's eternal watchfulness prevented an attack. When all was ready for sailing *La Grande Hermine* and the *Emerillon* were warped into the midstream and awaited a favourable wind to waft them homeward. Meanwhile Cartier on the third of May, the fête of the Holy Cross, erected a cross thirty-five feet high on the bank of the Ste. Croix having carved on it a shield bearing the words:

FRANCISCUS PRIMUS DEI GRATIA FRANCORUM REGNAT.

Thus did Cartier lay claim for Francis I to the country watered by the St. Lawrence. Cartier regretted turning homeward with no other evidence of his discoveries than the furs stored in the holds of his vessels. Donnacona was reputed to have been a great traveller, who had visited every part of Canada, Hochelaga and Saguenay, and professed to have seen other races than the Indians and also to know where gold and silver were to be found. So Cartier on the eve of departure seized Donnacona and nine other chiefs and held them prisoners on his vessels, intending to have them relate to King Francis the wonders of their vast country. Although he took them by force he seems to have treated them kindly both on the voyage and later in France, holding them as guests rather than prisoners.

FRANCIS I

SLAVE SHIPS

(May 6, 1536)

The eager wind leaps Franceward with halloo,
The plunging prows exulting forward race
Like hounds that sight the stag and, at the view,
With double speed press on the panting chase.
Why all this breathless haste to backward trace
To yon Old World the path that found the New?
Is gold the freight, or gems a crown to grace,
Or Orient silks of every rainbow hue?

Ah no! far other cargo swift is borne
From stricken Stadacona's wailing gate:—
Good Donnacona and his chieftains torn
By ingrate treason from their free estate,
Trophies to prove a boast, adorn a tale,
Go chained to France . . . . "Aloft there, crowd on sail!"

Cartier set sail from Isle au Coudres on May 16, 1536. Proceeding leisurely down the St. Lawrence and out into the gulf he noted capes and islands and bays suitable for harbours. Early in June the southern coast of Newfoundland was reached. The vessels entered a harbour named Roughnouse, a short distance from Cape Race. Here they took in water and wood and on the 19th of the month finally set sail for France. Winds were favourable, and on July 6, the two weather-beaten ships arrived safely in the harbour of St. Malo. The expedition from which so much had been expected proved a serious disappointment. It had achieved nothing of real value. The reports it brought of America were only such as were brought by fishermen, of whom hundreds were now yearly frequenting the waters about Newfoundland. True, they had with them an interesting group of savages, sturdy fellows, who brought with them vague tales of the mineral wealth to be found in the New World. Then the cost! Twenty-five stalwart men who had gone forth with hope in their hearts had perished in the wilderness. There was rejoicing in St. Malo at the return of the master mariner of the place, but there was also bitter lamentation. Cartier, however, did not despair and immediately set about planning another expedition to the St. Lawrence. But he found Francis I lukewarm. The new territory claimed for France was apparently of little value, and at first the king was not willing to risk more treasure on what seemed to him futile exploration.

RETURN TO FRANCE

(Spring, 1536)

Oh, haste thee, haste thee! little ship of mine;
Why dost thou loiter so? Across the sea
A voice is calling, calling thee and me,
The dear, sweet voice of home—my home and thine.
As does the caged bird for the wild wood pine
Where once he sang in fresh full-throated glee,
So longs my eager heart once more to be
Where old St. Malo's lights their welcome shine.

Awake! awake! thou naughty, slothful wind,
That sleepest, cradled in slow-rocking sails,
Fright forth this lagging keel through storm-torn foam.
Grim Stadacona's winter lurks behind! . . . .
What care I then for thy uproarious gales
That drive me on to summer and to home.

THIRD VOYAGE
1541-1542

France was at this time in a most disturbed condition. There was religious strife and civil conflict in the land, and the country was involved in war with Charles V of Spain. Francis I required all his resources for the conflicts immediately at hand. However, Cartier kept stressing the vastness and richness of the wide region he had explored, and his pleadings were aided by the testimony of Donnacona. Yes! there was fertile territory in Canada, great forests for the building of ships for the Royal Navy and the mercantile fleet, and undoubtedly a wealth of minerals to be found. Then there was probably a way through the continent to India and Cathay, the discovery of which would give France the leading place among the nations. Francis was inordinately jealous of Spain whose ships were bringing home vast wealth from Mexico, Peru and Chili. He hoped to share in the treasure trove of the East, and so he became not unwilling to listen to Cartier's plea for further help. At length, in 1538, peace returned to France, and the king consented to fit out another expedition, one for both discovery and colonization, on a vaster scale than either of the former more or less haphazard projects. On this expedition Cartier was to hold the position of "Captain-General and Master-Pilot" of all the vessels sent. His commission was signed on October 17, 1540, and he at once began making preparations for a speedy departure for the New World.

IRRITATION

(May 23, ,1541)

I will not longer wait for Roberval.
Am I his henchman, bound upon his nod
To fetch and and carry like a Helot clod,
Or, at his frown, before him trembling fall?
'Twas I who first did hear the mystic call
Of that new world I won for France and God,
Whereon no Christian foot had ever trod
Since Christ on Calvary died to save us all.

But now, forsooth, the King gives me command
This dallying seigneur safely to convey
Across yon sea's great, danger-full expanse
To plant the Lilies in my virgin land:
By God! it is too much; I will not stay . . . .
Up anchor! lads; ourselves will found New France.

Meanwhile all plans were suddenly changed. Jean François de la Roque, Sieur de Roberval, had become greatly attracted by the tales brought to France by Cartier and his savages. De Roberval was one of the leading nobles of France and a favorite of the king. He thought that Canada adjoined the rich East and ambitiously wished to share in the renown and wealth to be gained by exploration on a large scale. He urged on the king a project of colonization. So the "little king of Vimeu" as he was familiarly known to Francis, was given, on January 15, 1541, supreme command of the projected expedition, his commission authorizing him "to found colonies, build forts, carry on war, administer justice, grant fiefs, and lordships," etc. Cartier, however, was still to hold rank as Captain-General and Master-Pilot. De Roberval was generously treated by the king and given sufficient funds to buy and equip the five vessels which were to be under the immediate command of Cartier. There was difficulty in manning the vessels, and there were irritating delays, but at length by impressing the inmates of prisons, makeshift crews were provided for Cartier's fleet. De Roberval was to have accompanied it to the New World but remained behind to complete his task of providing for colonization. On May 23, 1541, Cartier, understanding that de Roberval would immediately follow him, with a fleet of five vessels, totalling about four hundred tons, sailed from the harbour of St. Malo, and after a stormy voyage reached the Ste. Croix about August 22.

DISCOURAGEMENT

(Cap Rouge, June, 1542)

Farewell to thee, land of my hope, farewell!
No more shall I behold thy siren shore,
My prow thy mighty current stem no more—
Oh, why dost thou so harshly me repel?
Ensnared and mazed by thine enchantress' spell,
I dared to dream thou'dst chosen me before
All other men to open wide the door
Of the dim silence wherein thou dost dwell:

In eager pride on this fair height I sought
To found an empire . . . . and enlarge my fame—
And thou hast mocked me with foul failure's shame!
O Christ! in vain I've dreamed, in vain have wrought;
And other eyes in other glorious years
My hope fulfilled will see . . . without my tears.

LIMOILOU
1542-1557

Cartier's vessels cast anchor beneath the shadow of the towering height of Quebec. The Stadacona Indians were still there, awaiting the return of their great chief, Donnacona, and his companions who had been spirited away to France five years before. They swarmed about the ships in their canoes, scanning the decks for their long absent friends; but none of them were to be seen, and to their anxious enquiries Cartier replied that Donnacona had died (as he was an old man this was not unexpected), and that the other chiefs had married noble ladies in France and were living contentedly on their estates. Base deception, unworthy of the Mariner of St. Malo!—the one blot on his illustrious career! All the chiefs were dead. Donnacona had been baptized in 1538 and named François, and the others had likewise been given French names before their deaths. The Indians doubted Cartier's word and objected to having the French settle in the vicinity of Stadacona, as they had done in 1535. So Cartier continued up the St. Lawrence for about nine miles, and at Cap Rouge established a fortified post, called by him Charlesbourg Royal. Here he set to work making roads and building forts, clearing the forest, and sowing turnip and other seeds. But the Indians remained unfriendly. The bitter Canadian winter disheartened the colonists. When spring came and there was no sign of the tardy de Roberval, Charlesbourg Royal was abandoned, and Cartier and his disappointed followers set sail for France. On their voyage homeward they came upon de Roberval in the harbour of St. John's, Newfoundland. De Roberval ordered Cartier to return to Charlesbourg Royal; but the Mariner of St. Malo had had enough of New France, under which name the country was now known, and, slipping quietly away in the night, returned to France.

HOME

I

FAME

What say you, friends—that I have glory won
By voyaging far into the pregnant west
That, like a fertile mother, at her breast
Aye suckles a new-born and lusty son,
An infant world, that swift will grow and run
A race of progress with such youthful zest
Shall soon outstrip slow time and, with a jest,
The victory count as light as nothing done?

'Tis true that such an one I've found and claimed
As child adoptive of the house of France—
No greater fame e'er glowed 'neath heaven's dome!
But though a thousand times more fair it flamed,
'Twere dull indeed beside the welcoming glance
Of these bright embers on the hearth of home.

To all outward appearances Cartier's work for the founding of a New France in the New World had been a costly, hopeless venture; but he had given France a valid claim to the northern part of North America, a claim that was not to be pressed until sixty odd years later, when Champlain, a man of noble character and sound judgment, became the moving spirit in the work of exploration and settlement in New France. That King Francis thought well of Cartier's work is evidenced from the fact that he enobled him with the title of Sieur de Limoilou. He took up his residence on his seigniory, about seven miles distant from St. Malo, and, judging from his buildings, became a gentleman farmer. He had barns, a cow stable and a wine-press, and he who had long ploughed the seas of the north and the south turned to ploughing the land. His main residence had a tower, within which was a winding stair; up this he no doubt time and again climbed to catch glimpses of the distant sea, his mind going forth on his great adventures while he vaguely wished that his youth might return and he could once more set sail for the west to win the east with its fabled riches. He had the satisfaction of knowing that by his efforts he had given an empire to France, which, when the kingdom was free from devastating war, might be colonized and developed to become the brightest colonial jewel in the French crown.

II

THE CAST

I heard Adventure's many-voicéd call
That bade me forth on eager-questing keel:
I felt the mighty urge that those do feel
Who dare with Fate to gamble all for all:
And caring nothing how the dice should fall—
If woe were in the cast, or smiling weal;
Not recking what the unknown should conceal,
I cried, "I throw, if laurel wait . . . or pall!"

I cast, and lo! I gained an empire vast
For my good king—aye, vaster far than e'er
Was visioned by all-conquering glorious Rome.
And now, my questing o'er, I come at last,
Fame-weary, seeking rest, into this fair
And tranquil haven, this dear port . . . my home.

During the declining years of his life Cartier lived happily at Limoilou, cultivating his fields and acting as a father to his dependants. He had no children of his own, but there is evidence that he ever had a warm heart and an open hand for the children of others. His early life had been spent buffetting storms, and he was thus all the better able to appreciate the peace and calm of Limoilou. Around his staunch tower the winds might howl and roar, but the smother of great waves could not reach him and there was no threat from rocky shores. The tempest blasts were no doubt music to his ears, calling up memories of his battles against ocean storms. From his watch tower the glimpses he caught of vessels sweeping from far lands, laden to the gunwales with rich cargoes, or of ships under full sail making their way to the Atlantic on adventure bent, stirred his heart like strong wine and kept his faculties keen and alert to the end. Age prevented him from once more planting the standard of France overseas, but ever in his dreams he saw that New France discovered by him, growing populous and strong, a worthy rival of the colonies of Spain, Portugal, and England. His work would yet bear fruit; some other Frenchman would take up his task and win great glory for France. His dream was to be realized fifty-one years after his death, when Champlain planted the *fleur-de-lis* on the site of old Stadacona.

III

TEMPEST

Howl, ye wild winds, like wolves about my tower;
Shriek like the damnéd souls in deepest Hell;
Claw at my casement like dread fingers fell;
Roar like Beelzebub in all his power:
Moan in yon chimney like witch hags that cower,
Sobbing and whimpering at the hangman's knell;
Laugh like lewd goblins as they, gibbering, tell
Of graves defiled ere tolls the midnight hour:

Ye cannot fright who knows your fury vain,
Who oft has foiled you with his cunning skill
When to his tops ye spat thick slavering foam:
Ye fools! And do ye think that once again
Ye buffet my frail, staggering barque? Be still!
Ye cannot break the calm within my home.

The inevitable end was approaching. On September 1, 1557, news was brought to St. Malo that Cartier had set out on his final voyage from time to eternity. His name had become a legend to the mariners of France and there was sincere and heartfelt mourning when the news was spread abroad that the Master Mariner of St. Malo was no more. But he had left an immortal memory behind him. Here, in Canada, every child is familiar with his illustrious name. His work paved the way for the establishment of French rule along the St. Lawrence and by the Great Lakes. Men of his nation, following in his steps, invaded the wilderness and hewed out homes for themselves and made the beginnings of great cities and prosperous towns and villages. All honour to Cartier, the intrepid explorer, who pointed the way for the Canada that now extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Great Lakes to the Arctic circle. His pioneering work made this development inevitable. It matters not by whom it has been done—French or English—but Cartier's name will ever remain as the most distinguished among the valiant men who saw clearly the possibilities of the region now known as Canada and struggled with might and main to achieve a home in the New World for the teeming millions of Europe. This supreme explorer died in his sixty-sixth year, but his works still live and his memory remains green by the brown rock of Quebec and the wooded slopes of Mount Royal.

IV

A SAILOR BRINGS NEWS

(September 1, 1557)

"Ho! shipmates, have ye heard the sudden news?
'Twixt dark and dawn, 'tis said, Jacques Cartier
His cable slipped and quietly stole away
Upon another distant mystic cruise—
A cruise we all must take nor can refuse
When come our sailing orders: no delay
Will brook the Lord High Admiral that day,
Though fast our *hook* hold deep in harbour ooze."

"Stout Cartier gone? . . . But he'll not be forgot,
For he has left a name that large is writ
In golden history's bright-illumined tome:
God grant the wind be fair and he be brought
To where with joy he'll see a beacon lit
By those he loved, to guide him safely home."