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P I O N E E R L I S C O V E R E R S

O F

C A N A D A .

by

W I L L I A M A. H A Y D E N .

Pioneer Discoverers of Canada.

One of the most outstanding periods of the world's history was the fifteenth century. Not that the ancient times, or the succeeding years of the Christian era, were lacking in epochal brilliance, but rather that, during this particular century - "a century favourable to men of genius in every walk of life" - human intelligence was awakened to its fullness by the magnitude of invention and discovery by which this age is characterized. The science of navigation had long since advanced from the paddle to the sail, which enabled the busy marts of the Old World to engage oftener in a more extensive trade, and the peoples of the different countries to become better known, one with the other. Indeed, it was this advance in the scientific knowledge of navigation which made possible the exploits of daring attributed to the Phoenician sailors. For, history relates that about six hundred years before Christ blessed this earth with His Presence, the Phoenician sailors "doubled the Cape of Good Hope" and returned by the Straits of Gibraltar.

But for centuries after this daring exploit, it was customary to transport the wealth of the East to the large business centres of the West by slow moving caravans. Gradually, the people of the West became familiar with the products of the East, and their increased knowledge of the riches of this distant land awakened in their souls a desire - probably avaricious - to travel to that land where the rich spices grew, and return home with some of its untold riches and fabulous wealth. However, by the time the people were aroused by

the spirit of adventure and curiosity to seek this new land, the pioneer trains of intercourse were being greatly hindered in their journeys by the menacing attitude of the Asiatic sects, particularly the Turks. The antagonism and bitter feeling between the East and the West, which had existed from the earliest ages, had never been allowed to mellow during the succeeding years. The epic struggles of the Greeks and the Persians were renewed by the Turks and the Crusaders. In consequence of this, Constantinople fell, in 1453, into the hands of the Asiatic oppressor. Thus was the chief artery of communication between the East and the West closed. The Turkish sword continued to penetrate more deeply into the European continent with the result that the West realized the immediate need of another passageway to the Orient. And fortunately, at this time, the thoughts of the Western world were being directed in the right channel.

The merchants of Europe realized the imperativeness of a new lane of commerce. Yet why did they hesitate, and even refuse, to sponsor and foster and aid the efforts of those who voluntarily offered to undertake such a journey over uncharted seas? The only apparent reason is this - not all believed in the sphericity of the earth. Probably, their ready acceptance of such a theory seemed impossible in the light of the limited knowledge which they possessed, of world geography, and of the science of navigation, in particular. Yet, from earliest times, men of imagination had expressed an absolute belief in such a theory. Aristotle and Plato not only taught that the world is round but demonstrated the truth of their conviction from the earth's shadow at lunar eclipses. The furtherance of this theory depended more upon the Greeks than the Romans, for the former were

possessed of a more imaginative spirit than the latter. Happily, a few learned geographers of Rome, particularly Pliny and Ptolemy, received this theory from the scholars of Greece. And finally, Virgil and Cicero, as well as the other illustrious Roman writers, adopting the viewpoint of their own kinsmen and accepting it prima facie, communicated it to posterity through their writings. No doubt, this is the avenue through which Columbus received his knowledge concerning this age-old theory.

But can it be said that the necessity of a new passageway to the East and the knowledge of the earth's sphericity were the only motives which stimulated Columbus to make his memorable voyage in 1492? Or is it possible that rumor had whispered to him that already a new land had been touched by the Norsemen? Perhaps, Columbus had talked with one of those adventurous sailors who had visited Iceland and who had returned to Europe with his cargo of fish - a profitable enterprize for men of daring. These suggestions may be but idle dreams, but if, in the slightest degree, they are true, Columbus most likely considered the new land a portion of the Asiatic continent which all Europe so eagerly desired to reach by sea. But, can it be said that the voyages of Columbus were the first made to the New World, or were there other brave mariners who saw the Western Hemisphere years before?

Many traditions have been handed down to us concerning the early discovery of Canada. But, of all these, one alone stands out, and alone, is verified by documentary evidence of a very convincing nature. The truth of the fact that the Norsemen, as early as 1000 A.D., and probably before, had skirted the shores of Labrador, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and the New England States, is placed beyond the realm of doubt by the scholarly thesis of Professor Rafn, entitled

"Antiquitates Americanae." In his work, Professor Rafn relates the early history of Norway - a country which, up to the ninth century, had been the battlefield of internal factious clans or small kingdoms. Accepting the Holy Roman Empire as a model form of government, Harold Fairhair succeeded in centralizing the government of his country in the best interests of his people, but not before he had conquered all those rival groups which occupied the country and the surrounding Islands. So long had these leaders been accustomed to dominate others, that a subordinate position became repugnant to them. Then began the migration of these jarls and their adherents to other lands: and one of these groups, in 874, made its way to Iceland where a settlement grew up - a republic in fact - having a population within a brief time, of fifty thousand souls. They soon prospered, for they tilled the soil and carried on an active trade with Northern Europe, and even defended their new home against every invader. As these peoples were educated, literature sprang up in the form of Sagas - stories passed by work of mouth from generation to generation, and elaborated with each narration until writing preserved for us these traditionary accounts of early achievements.

Chief among these Sagas is "The Saga of Erik the Red." The parchment upon which this story is written, was found "in a monastery on the island of Flatey, in Iceland." Herein are recorded the expeditions of discovery to the west and the south of Iceland, and the accuracy of the accounts may be judged from the degree of certainty with which we are able to identify Erik the Red's Vinland with New England and Helluland with Newfoundland. This saga recounts the story of Bjarni Herjulfson, who, about 986 A.D., in seeking Greenland, which had been discovered in 876, was tossed about on the sea by adverse winds and prevented from

reckoning his position by dense fogs, for three days. When the elements became normal, a day's sailing brought them to a land covered with wood, and with no mountains visible. They sailed from this land, and within two days saw another flat-lying land covered, as was the first, with trees. Bjarni knew these countries were not Greenland, for he had been informed that the latter would be easily recognized by its ice hills. Yet he did not touch the coast of these wooded areas, contrary to the wishes of his sailors. How unfortunate he did not, for we would now be reasonably certain that the New World had been discovered by the Norsemen earlier than 1000 A.D. Yet does not this account seem to indicate that these Norsemen were the actual discoverers of Canada? Let us recall our history for a moment. When Lord Halifax, in 1749, financially supported the first sincere attempt on the part of the English to colonize Nova Scotia - a land they had acquired by the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1713 - does not history relate that Lord Cornwallis, the commander of the expedition, sailed along the coast of Nova Scotia in search of a suitable place to settle his colony, and that later, he remarked in his report, that along the coast line the trees grew to the water's edge? In the light of this fact, does it not seem reasonable to admit that Bjarni may have actually viewed Nova Scotia, and perhaps, the southern portion of the coast of Labrador?

If, however, this were the only evidence extant to substantiate the claim of the Norse discovery of Canada, doubt might still exist, and endless discussion might ensue, regarding the land actually sighted. But the saga continues, speaking forth the discoveries of Leif, the Lucky, son of Erik, the Red. About the year 1000 A.D. Leif decided to visit those lands which Bjarni Herjulfson had reported seeing. Success

attended his endeavour. He and his sailors visited the first land which came into view, but found it to be rocky and unsuitable for agriculture. To it was given the name, Helluland. Setting forth once more, they came to a flat stretch of wooded country. This they called Markland, the district known to-day as Nova Scotia. Then they sailed southward. After two days on the open sea, they drew up their boats on the coast of a fertile country where the grass remained green during most of the year. Here, they delayed for some time, exploring the surrounding territory. So abundant were the grapes that Leif named this much favoured country Vinland. The next spring found Leif in Greenland. The narration of his experiences so aroused the curiosity of his countrymen that to his effort may be attributed the many successive visits of his kinsmen to this new world, especially Vinland.

But, in those days, there were no fast ships, no wireless, and no radio so that little of this valuable knowledge ever reached Europe. True, occasionally the possibilities of large profits from a cargo of fish (or probably furs, the result of bartering with the Indians whom they met on these new found coasts) brought some of these sailors to Europe. While on such a journey, they, in the narration of their experiences, may have alluded to the discovery of a new land. Yet Europe remained indifferent, and logically so, for at that time, world conditions were not so favourable as to permit either the possession of or the colonization of such a distant land.

Meanwhile, the brutal and uncultured Turk had gradually taken possession of Constantinople, the gateway of international commerce. Of an avaricious nature, their business methods soon forced the Western merchants to pay less frequent visits to Asia. The difficulty of

maintaining an unmolested trade route created within the breasts of the men of those times, a desire to discover a passageway by sea. But a sea route to Cathay or Cipango required a more comprehensive knowledge of geography than the peoples of Europe possessed at the moment. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that men began to study again, the theories of the ancients. The theory of the earth's sphericity was once more paraded before the view of the intellectual folk. Fortunately, there were some who could comprehend it, and believe it. Yet exploration over unknown seas could not have been carried out, had not Roger Bacon, making use of the principle of magnetic polarity - already known to the East - invented the compass, which, with the astrolabe, permitted man to sail over the large oceans with utmost confidence in his ability to guide himself safely wherever he wished to go.

Motives are the main spring of action. Geographical knowledge is of little use, if we are not driven by strong influences to make it serve our every desire. Columbus had carefully and assiduously considered the conclusions of his predecessors as regards the possibility of reaching this country of fabled wealth. Personally, he considered it practical; rebuffs from all sides, failed to alter his opinion or deter him from his purpose. Equally arresting in their influence, were the writings of Marco Polo, a Venetian who, at an early age went with his father to the court of the Great Khan of Asia, where he lived for many years as the King's beloved companion. When Marco returned to Venice, he described in glowing reality, the unlimited and inconceivable wealth of the East. Each year that passed served but to create an increasing desire in Columbus' soul to realize his ambition. Humiliating rebuffs seemed to strengthen his determination to attain his goal. Columbus

maintained a heroic perseverance amid every trial. Finally, the King and the Queen of Spain were won over; and Columbus soon accomplished his set task. He discovered a new land. Europe immediately took on new life. Rising before their vision was the possibility of a greater and more profitable commerce. Enterprize was stimulated; and timid souls hastily cast aside their grave fears.

Columbus' glorious achievement soon became the topic of Europe's conversation. The ruling sovereigns of each country, and the adventurous mariners of each town, were buoyed up with the expectancy of fame and wealth. The former were now more willing to listen to the entreaties of the latter. In England, John Cabot, a Genoese, petitioned King Henry Vll, to grant him the privilege to duplicate Columbus' voyage in the interests of the English people. The King was pleased to give his assent to this request, but, had he listened to Cabot's plea made one year before Columbus touched the Indies, in all probability, England would be credited to-day with the discovery of America.

John Cabot, master mariner, set out in the spring of 1497, from the port of Bristol on what was destined to be his voyage of discovery. Passing Ireland, he sailed directly westward, and in the latter part of June reached land. Cabot, believing he had discovered the far-away Cathay, the rich country of the Great Khan, sailed along the coast line of the New World, going as far North as the desolate shores of Labrador and southward to the present State of Maine, in hope, no doubt, of discovering gold, seeing new peoples, and observing the general characteristics of the land which it was his good fortune to reach. Columbus, on his voyage westward, not only saw and was able to describe fully the people who inhabited the West Indies, but he, even

took five or six of these people to Spain on his return. Cabot was less fortunate, for he saw no native inhabitant in his surveying of these lands. He did observe snares set for trapping game and trees cut by a sharp instrument, unmistakable evidence that human beings lived there. He noted that climatic conditions were most favourable, and that the soil of the southern portion of the continent was very productive. His comment on the quantity of fish infesting the sea waters along the Nova Scotian coast is interesting. He said that if a basket, weighted with a stone, were lowered into the water, it could be immediately drawn out, filled with fish. Little wonder is it then, that the Basque fishermen undertook such a hazardous voyage over dangerous seas to ply their trade!

The question which has greatly interested the historian is, what land did Cabot first touch. To-day, many claims are made, especially in Newfoundland and Cape Breton, to this first visit. Tradition tells us that, as Cabot's vessel entered King's Cove, Newfoundland, his sailors were so enraptured with the view that they cried out, "Bona Vista." Thus do these people of our sister dominion account for the Bonavista Bay, and incidentally, substantiate their claim to first discovery by Cabot. However, as far as the vague details of his voyage permit a conclusion, it is considered probable that Cabot's actual landfall was on the coast of Labrador, and that on his southern excursion along the coast, he crossed Belle Isle Strait and sighted Newfoundland's eastern coast.

In regard to succeeding voyages across the Atlantic made by Cabot, conjecture must supply what authoritatively is unknown. We do know that to John Cabot alone (his sons are not mentioned in the

second letters patent of King Henry VII) was permission given to "discover certain islands and firm land" as Pedro de Ayala, a friend of the English King remarked in his letter to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. To this end, a fleet of six ships fitted out by the English souvereign, set sail from Bristol sometime during the summer of 1498. This adventure in search of new land awakened Europe, and particularly England, to the possibilities of an extended commercial trade, for Cabot sailed far North to the shores of Greenland, and as far South as the present state of Carolina. His voyage familiarized the Old World with the new country; and when Cabot told the people on his return that these northern sea waters, near the coast line which he had skirted, were teeming with codfish, he provided the bait which lured the fishermen of Europe across the Atlantic in search of a very lucrative business.

Did Sebastian Cabot accompany his father on this voyage? Accounts, in this regard, are conflicting. Some say that Sebastian accompanied his father on this occasion, and to substantiate their statement quote Sebastian's words in description of what he saw in this Empire of the North. He pictured for his ready listeners the vessels hindered in their progress by shoals of fish, the fish-eating bears and the uncouth Indian. But we must keep in mind that, like the claims of Amerigo Vespucci, the claims of Sebastian Cabot, unless corroborated by witnesses, are viewed with doubt by reliable historians, for the former was considered a castle builder when occasion warranted it. As the result of these voyages, one fact stands out: to the Cabot family, in general, must credit be given for the exploration of the long eastern coast line of the future North American continent. And to the father, in particular, must we give due honour as the first man to reach the mainland on this side of the Atlantic. In

making this statement, I am not contradicting myself. The Norsemen, undoubtedly, saw and lived on this land before any other Europeans. But their discovery was unproductive because of its immaturity. It meant little or nothing to the Old World. On the other hand, Cabot's success fired the imagination of Europe and acted as an incentive to further efforts of discovery, and even colonization. To Cabot, therefore, has history given the honor and the fame of this wonderful achievement.

It would appear that each nation of the Old World took it in turn to discover and explore this North American continent without being fully cognizant of the results of previous voyages. So, in 1500, King Manoel of Portugal granted Gaspar Cortereal letters patent "to discover islands and a continent" to the westward; and let it be remarked that the granting of this request cost the King nothing, for Cortereal paid all the expenses in connection with this perilous undertaking. Partial success crowned his first effort: he found land: as far as historians are able to determine, he anchored his ship close to the eastern coast of Newfoundland. In the following year, Cortereal made a second attempt to discover the continent, and lost his life. However the two ships which accompanied him on this voyage returned safely to Portugal, and from the account they gave of their travel over the sea, we are certain that they saw this continent, and that they sailed along its coast in the vicinity of Nova Scotia and New York. They did carry back several Indians to Portugal, a rather imprudent act, I think, on the part of discoverers of new lands. Despite the fact that material evidence was necessary to convince an incredulous people, and at the same time, to substantiate a claim of discovery, yet could not some of the flora and fauna of the new land have been brought home

instead? Sometimes, I feel that this injudicious act on the part of our early explorers may account for the suspicion with which the Indian viewed the advent of the white man to his land.

France, as a nation, was extremely dilatory in attempting to secure for herself a share in the glory of discovery of a New World. So intently absorbed was she in her own interests that, while England, Spain and Portugal were striving to find a sea route to Cathay, even the pecuniary advantage of such an endeavour did not act as a sufficient incentive to the French King. In the meantime, Cabot's story of the abundance of codfish in the sea waters around Newfoundland had reached the ears of the fishermen of France. In 1504, they betook themselves to this new fishing field only to find that the English and the Portuguese fishermen had been availing themselves of the opportunity of adding quickly to their wealth for some time previous. Before long, however, these fish merchants of Honfleur and Dieppe were as frequent visitors to the cod banks as others. This fact is indisputable, as the name Cape Breton Island will always testify.

The people of Dieppe were aroused, in 1506, by the wealth Spain was continuing to derive from her American discoveries. So they immediately fitted out two ships, and placed two skilled navigators in charge of them to undertake a voyage of discovery and exploration to new lands. One of these pilots was the Verrazano of the future fame. The net result of their sea travels was the discovery of the St. Lawrence River. Returning home the next year, they took with them a few Indians whose habits and customs were strange and whose language was unintelligible. And so the foolish notion that every voyage of discovery must include the prize of a few inhabitants of the new continent, still

persisted. However, no further attempts to go in search of fame and wealth were made by France as a people or as a nation for the next fifteen years.

The year 1523 saw the King of France and the Emperor of Germany in the throes of a war, not uncommon for these two rulers. The former desired to trouble and annoy his enemy as much as possible: so he ordered Verrazano to prevent any ships bearing new world wealth to Charles V, from reaching their destination. So successful and profitable was this venture that the King of France was momentarily amazed. Well he might be, for Verrazano, by an act of piracy, brought him one million five hundred thousand dollars! Francis immediately decided that his late policy of disinterestedness in the affairs of the newly discovered lands was depriving himself and his country of the possibility of acquiring great wealth. Consequently, in 1524, he directed Verrazano to undertake a voyage in search of new lands, where precious metals might abound, and at the same time to try to find a passageway to Cathay. This voyage increased Europe's knowledge of this continent. Not only did Verrazano actually explore and examine very closely the greater length of the United States eastern coast line and the Nova Scotian shores, but he even sailed into every inlet along the coast. His detailed report of his voyage is unsurpassed by any previous account of explorations. He noted carefully the nature of the fogs and the mists, the direction of the wind, the exact location of the dangerous reefs along the coast, the varying depths of the water as he sailed northward from Carolina, the density and the beauty of the forests, the possibilities of good wine being made from the grapes found in the new land, even the height to which the tide rose in the Hudson River, and the kindnesses of

the natives of the different tribes. He, likewise, kept in view the second purpose of this explorative travel, the discovery, if possible, of a sea route to Cathay. On his return, he said that he thought Cathay could be reached by travelling around the northern portion of these western lands. Later discoveries in the Arctic circle, especially that of Bering Strait, show that Verrazano's conclusions were correct.

Verrazano's voyage had the effect of arousing France to take an active participation in the new world discovery. While to him is given the credit of establishing definitely in the minds of Europeans the exact nature of the United States' eastern coast, still it must be admitted that such an achievement could have but one natural reaction in those times. And that was to make the people of France realize more seriously the splendid opportunities, previously ignored by them, of adding to their domains and wealth. One man, in particular, kept a vigilant eye on world events: his greatest interest centred in the land which Verrazano had made better known to the Western World. This individual was Philippe de Chabot, the capable, energetic and courageous French admiral, who helped to guide the destinies of France under Francis 1. It was his foresight and good judgment which enabled France to respond immediately to the desire of her King for further attempts of discovery. Chabot's choice of the reputable mariner, Jacques Cartier, redounds to the everlasting honour of France, and speaks eloquently of this admiral's forethought in being prepared to meet such a condition.

Born at St. Malo, in 1494, Jacques Cartier, a descendant of "hardy mariners" spent the most of his early life on the sea. Little did he think that he was thereby qualifying himself for those glorious deeds with which his name was later to be associated, and through which

history will preserve a recognition of his bold adventure. The harbour of St.Malo received the French fishermen on their return home from the fishing fields of the North Western Atlantic. Cartier, a son of the sea, no doubt listened eagerly to the stories of this strange North land brought back by these daring sea-rovers. It has been suggested that, probably, Cartier had sailed already as far as the Grand Banks before being commissioned by the French King to go on a voyage of discovery, specifically to learn if the Atlantic afforded any pathway or commercial water route to Cathay. His thought concentrated on increased territorial possessions and great wealth, Francis I directed Cartier to claim for his country all lands upon which he set his foot. Performing the customary act of repairing to the cathedral for a priestly blessing, and affirming their allegiance to their King before entering upon such a hazardous undertaking, Cartier and his one hundred and twenty sailors set sail on April 20, 1534.

Favoured with friendly winds, a rather uneventful voyage of twenty days brought him to Newfoundland. Here Cartier was held for some days, for the numerous ice floes and the driving winds threatened either to destroy his frail vessels or force him away from his objective. When the weather cleared, he sailed northward. As he entered the Strait of Belle Isle his vessels were enshrouded in a dense fog which prevented any observation of his position from being taken. Meanwhile his ships were subject to the vagaries of the tide. When the atmosphere cleared, Cartier found himself close to the coast of Labrador. This barren, slaty land so suddenly cast before his eyes caused him to remark in his disappointment, "Faith, I think this is the region God gave Cain." He sailed along these bleak shores as far as Cumberland Bay, and examined carefully each inlet.

Despite its desolateness, however, the coast of Labrador resounded with the strokes of the sailors' axe as the cross of France was planted firmly there, proclaiming to the World that this land, by right of discovery, belonged to France. And let it be remarked here that it took over two hundred years of exhaustive strife to efface that mark from the North American continent; and even then, only the mark had been changed, for the Province of Quebec is a living testimony of the continuation of the spirit of possession. Though but a few days on these barren shores, Cartier accidentally met some of the inland native inhabitants whom he described as "men of fine stature," but "indomitable and savage."

Cartier realized that no material advantage could be gained by continuing a northerly course. So, somewhat disappointed, he turned the prows of his boats southward. A few weeks sailing, tossed about on violent seas, brought them to Cape Anguille from which point Cartier shaped his course in a westerly direction. Soon he reached in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Islands which were actually alive with wild fowl, and so fertile that Cartier and his sailors thought they must have touched the confines of a heavenly garden. He named the last island reached Brion Island in honour of the French Admiral, Philippe de Chabot, Sieur de Brion. Leaving behind rather reluctantly this pleasant land (for shortness of time compelled him to carry on quickly this explorative endeavour) his vessels skirted the southern coast of Magdalen Island. Continuing south-westward, it became the good fortune of Cartier to sight and view closely Prince Edward Island. He attempted to land on its north-eastern shores, but was driven back by the treacherous, storm-tossed waters. Undaunted, Cartier rounded North Point and found himself in the Strait of Northumberland, the waters of which he followed as far as Cape Tormentine.

Retracing his steps, he noted accurately the topographical features of New Brunswick's shores as far as Miscou Island. Here he entered a large bay, and to his surprise and the dismay of his sailors, beheld nearly fifty canoes, filled with Indians, gliding swiftly over the water. Friendly trade, however, was their only aim. So luxuriant was the growth of vegetation around the bay, and so intensely warm were the rays of the sun that Cartier named this body of water la Baye de Chaleur. Nevertheless, for them the delightful climate palled when it was realized that no solution to the commercial problem could be found.

By July 14, 1534, Cartier had reached Gaspé Bay where he, again, came in contact with the natives who protested the erection of a cross on their land, fearing it meant that Cartier was claiming their country. However, a few presents of little value and Cartier's outwardly sincere assurance that the cross was merely a sign for the guidance of future voyages, soon allayed the fears of the Indians. By this time, the summer season was on the wane, and Cartier knew the Atlantic Ocean would be lashed soon by autumnal gales. So, having persuaded, (or treacherously captured as some venture to say), the two sons of the Indian Lord of Canada to come on board his boat, Cartier left Gaspé and sailed eastward along Anticosti Island. His wish was to continue a westward course along the Quebec shore. But, as the elements were becoming daily more unfavourable to geographical scrutiny, Cartier decided to set his sails for France. On September 5, the people of "Saint Malo hail'd him home again," from the perils over the sea. The first sincere effort to fathom the secrets of this Northland had been made.

The reconnaissance of the Gulf of St. Lawrence by Jacques Cartier seemed to indicate that the long sought sea route to Cathay was

a possibility. The French King's spirit was aroused by such a thought, and his vision pictured for him powerful, wealthy French kingdoms in the New World. Cartier, the intrepid navigator, just a month home, was commissioned to undertake a second voyage. And this time he was given three ships with the necessary crews and fifteen months' food. This was certainly an evidence of the King's desire, namely, a more extensive and intensive survey of the new land. With the nation - wide wish of God - speed upon their endeavour, Cartier, in the spring of 1535, took leave of the shores of France. Tempestuous seas separated the vessels which were not reunited until Newfoundland had been reached. Passing through the Strait of Belle Isle, Cartier sailed westward along the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and ascended the St. Lawrence River, reaching safely the Saguenay district where the towering cliffs cast their shadows upon the deep waters. Cartier continued his course along the river, but as he did so the gloomy waters and the heavy, dark forests on each side of this rolling, pitching, sea-like river frightened the sailors. But when Donnacona's two sons, who had returned to Canada with Cartier, were observed by their friends as the latter paddled in their canoes along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, shouts of welcome greeted Cartier's men. The sailors' fears were dissipated in a moment.

Cartier had learned from his willing (?) captives that a large Indian village, called Hochelaga, was situated at the head of the St. Lawrence river. It was his intention to visit this town, after he had viewed and carefully observed the native village of Stadacona (now Quebec) and the surrounding territory. To his surprise, the Indians of Stadacona opposed him in his avowed purpose to ascend the river, and tried strenuously to prevent such a journey. Even the guides refused to go.

Terrifying acts, however, failed to effect a change in Cartier's plans. The first week of October found him welcomed by the Indians of Hochelaga. He visited this fortified town, and noted carefully the customs and habits of the inhabitants. The latter thought Cartier a supernatural being, so like the Apostles, he was asked to heal their sick and maim. He was momentarily bewildered. Yet his readily resourceful spirit seized the occasion to read to them a part of St. John's Gospel. For the Indians, the ceremony was most impressive, and their satisfaction was further increased by presents of little monetary value.

Of especial historical importance was Cartier's next achievement. He ascended the mountain at whose base the fortified Indian town was so ideally and strategically situated. What fell within the scope of Cartier's vision so elated this Breton mariner that he immediately named this huge tower of Nature le Mont Royal. Little wonder he did, for he was the first white man to view from its top the distant, sloping hills, the Lachine Rapids and the Ottawa River. The autumnal season was reaching its peak, and Cartier knowing preparations had to be made against a rigorous winter, and an increasing unfriendly Indian attitude, immediately returned to Quebec.

The intense cold of the winter caused much suffering among the French, and the dreadful disease, scurvy, accounted for twenty-five deaths. As Indian hostility was showing itself more openly now, apprehension for his men and himself, was felt by Cartier; consequently he decided on May 3, 1536, to return home. Kidnapping Donnacona and several other Indian chiefs, he left the next day for his homeland, which he reached safely two months later.

An interval of five years passed before any further attempt was made by France to extend Cartier's discoveries. In 1541, Cartier, now

in a subordinate position, was ordered to sail ahead of the commander of the voyage, François de la Roque, Sieur de Roberval. He proceeded directly to Stadacona, but passed nine miles beyond the present city of Quebec, and established a settlement at the mouth of Cape Rouge River. Because he did not give the Indians a satisfactory answer regarding the Chiefs he had taken away five years before, Indian hostility became so evident that the little colony was in danger of extermination at any moment. Impatient, because Roberval had not arrived by the spring of 1542, and fearing an Indian attack, Cartier set sail for France, meeting Roberval at St. John's, Newfoundland, on July 9. Contrary to the latter's wishes, Cartier sailed for France. And history records as great a failure, in the attempt to form a colony, for Roberval as for Cartier, for the former ruled in a despotic manner his criminally inclined colonists.

And thus came to a close that eventful period of discovery and early exploration, - a period of glorious achievement, of courageous daring. For, from the moment Columbus had set his foot on the West Indies, until Roberval had returned home to France, in 1543, many attempts had been made by the Old World Powers to secure for themselves the rich prizes of new discoveries. For the actuating force, the ulterior motive of the early voyages was the hope of reaching Cathay, unmolested. It was the search for this far Asiatic kingdom, which brought a new continent to the knowledge of the Europeans. America was discovered, Canada in particular, more by accident than by design. Each mariner sailed forth with exulting hopes, glorying, as it were, in his prize, but returned, if he survived the hazardous journey, in disappointment. The will o' the wisp, which had beckoned him on, seemed but to threaten his destruction. True, the bold and intrepid navigators explored every river and examined

each inlet along the coast. In vain, did they seek the goal of their adventure.

But their continuity of purpose had borne fruit. A new land had been found. New hopes filled their hearts. Perhaps, it was possible to reap as rich a harvest here. Who could tell? Spain was being yearly enriched by her discoveries. The avariciousness of nations was aroused. The evidences of individual efforts were so convincing that the crown heads were pleased to commission sea-worthy mariners, and aid them in their perilous undertakings.

What a debt of gratitude we owe these pioneer seafarers, these brave navigators who were willing to sacrifice life itself, if mankind should but benefit. They left homes; they sailed over uncharted seas; they mapped the courses for future voyages. But, in my opinion, they are esponsible, to a great extent, for the Indian hostility of future years. Indian suspicion of the white people was created by the injustifiable acts of early discoveries and explorers. On each voyage, a few of the natives were taken willingly (?) to the Old World, so we are told by some historians. Personally, I consider this statement merely a dimming of the historical light on this foolish practice. Even Champlain must share some of this responsibility; but let it be given to his credit that he, afterwards, regretted his indiscretion. On two distinct occasions, he and a few of his men led the attack of the Hurons against the Iroquois. And thus did these few unwise acts earn for the white man the eternal hatred of the Iroquois, especially.

Recriminations, however, speak but feebly in the presence of valorous deeds. The fact remains that the pioneers discovered and hastily xplored a very small part of what was destined to be, and what is, a

great country. It possessed the wealth they sought, as the mines of our country show to-day: most of its secrets, however, remained locked to them. But we, in the present age, may point with pride to this land of plenty, to this country of unparalleled scenic beauty, to this happy abode of our forefathers, and yet must we remember that this pride of ours has its foundation in our admiration for those whose deeds made a Canada possible.

However, before I draw the curtain on the first act of pioneer discovery in this land of ours, I think it opportune to note that the actuating motive of those perilous voyages, to which must be attributed those heroic, persevering efforts of courageous men has been at last realized. The almost incredible advantages of the science of aviation has enabled the twentieth century pioneer to exhibit to the world the correctness of Verrazano's judgment. For, on April, 23, of this present year, Captain George H. Wilkins, an Australian by birth, one who, many times before this, has faced the raging blizzards and cold desolateness of the Arctic, has by his epic flight over the Polar region, joined, for the first time, the northern extremities of the two continents, Europe and Asia. . . He has discovered the passageway to Cathay, the dream of Columbus, Cabot, Verrazano, and Cartier, and their intrepid followers. Stefansson, himself an Arctic explorer, has briefly but comprehensively summed up the scientific and the commercial value of Captain Wilkin's astounding achievement in those words, - "He has at last achieved the North-west Passage that the Elizabethans dreamed of, the short route to India."