

and at times were extremely menacing; but still the desire to colonize was not present. The feeling among the adventurers was that colonization would rather impede trade than promote it. Their vision was not one of happy homes for peaceful settlers; of a growing community requiring just laws and some sense of responsibility in their governors; but of trading stations from which all the world but themselves should be shut out. The public opinion which infallibly develops with population, even in backward states of society, was not desired; it never works well with monopoly.

Champlain's colony had at first consisted of about thirty persons. Twenty years later it barely exceeded one hundred, and then something happened. Charles I. of England had made war on France and had sent an expedition to La Rochelle which met only with disaster. But amongst other things he had granted letters of marque to David Kirke authorizing him to attack the French possessions in Canada. Having fitted out a small fleet of privateers, Kirke's first stroke was to capture, early in 1628, in the mouth of the St. Lawrence, a French fleet of eighteen vessels, which were carrying out a number of new colonists for the settlement and badly needed supplies of provisions, goods, and military stores, which were being anxiously awaited at Quebec. It happened that just at this time Cardinal Richelieu, Louis the Thirteenth's great Minister, moved by the representations Champlain had made as to the miserable condition and prospects of the colony, and the little reliance that could be placed on any efforts which mere commercial speculators would make to develop the country, had determined to take the interests of the colony into his own special charge. The plan he had resolved upon was to create a company on a much wider basis than any previously formed, and consisting of persons of higher standing, acting under his own authority. Thus had come into existence the Company of New France, more generally known as the Company of the Hundred Associates. The preamble of the edict issued "set forth in forcible terms," to quote a recent writer, "the lamentable failure of all previous trading associations to redeem their pledges in the matter of colonization; and the new associates were, by the terms of their charter, bound in the most formal and positive manner to convey annually to the colony, beginning in the year 1628, from two to three hundred *bonâ fide* settlers, and, in the fifteen following years, to transport thither a total of not less than four thousand persons male and female." The charter contained other useful stipulations, including one for the maintenance of a sufficient number of clergy to meet the spiritual wants both of settlers and natives. Fulfilling these conditions, they were to have absolute sovereignty, under the French King, of all French possessions between Florida and the Arctic regions, and from Newfoundland as far west as they could take possession of the country.

It was in furtherance of these plans that the fleet was sent out which Kirke captured. Had Kirke chosen to sail up the St. Lawrence at once with a couple of well-appointed vessels, Quebec would in all probability have fallen to the English in the summer of 1628; but Kirke did not want to have a struggle if it could be avoided, and, shrewdly calculating that lack of provisions would in the course of a few months reduce the garrison to dire extremities, he postponed action till the follow-