

## II.—HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY.

### I.—HISTORY OF CANADA.<sup>1</sup>

NOTE.—It has not been considered desirable to load the text of this section with numerous dates. For these the reader is referred to the chronological history printed at the end of this section of the Year Book.

**The Founding of the French Colony.**—The year 1608 may be regarded as the birth-year of Canada. The country and the name had been made known by the voyages of the Breton sea-captain, Jacques Cartier, of St. Malo, in the early half of the preceding century, and one or two ill-fated and wholly abortive attempts at settlement had subsequently been made; but in 1608, under the leadership of Samuel de Champlain, of Brouages in Saintonge, the first permanent settlement was made. It was but a slender colony that he planted under the shadow of the great rock of Quebec; the germ of life, however, was there, a life which, surviving all perils and difficulties, finally struck its roots deep and branched out into a numerous and vigorous people.

The claim of France to the St. Lawrence country was held to have been established by the discoveries made in the name of the French King, Francis I. It



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was assumed that what was then called Acadia, which may be described roughly as the region of our present Maritime provinces, had also become French territory, notwithstanding the fact that Cape Breton had been discovered in 1497 by John Cabot, sailing under a commission from Henry VII of England. During the five years preceding the arrival of Champlain's colony at Quebec, settlements in which Champlain took part had been attempted by the French at Port Royal (Annapolis) in Nova Scotia, and at the mouth of the St. Croix river.

**The Fur Trading Companies.**—The main motive for the occupation of the country, so far as the adventurers—Champlain perhaps alone excepted—were concerned, was the fur trade, though the royal commissions or patents under which they operated invariably contained stipulations for actual colonization and for missionary work among the Indians. These stipulations were systematically evaded by a succession of associations or companies to whom privileges were granted. Of course there were difficulties in the way; the native Indians were uncertain in their movements and at times menacing; but this was not the real deterrent to settlement. The adventurers thought, and with reason, that settlement would hamper trade.

Champlain's colony had at first consisted of about thirty persons. Twenty years later, when it barely exceeded one hundred, Charles I of England during his war on France granted letters of marque to David Kirke, authorizing him to attack the French possessions in Canada. After fitting out a small fleet of privateers, Kirke's first stroke, early in 1628, was to capture, in the mouth of the St. Lawrence,

<sup>1</sup>Revised and abridged from the history prepared under the direction of Arthur G. Doughty, C.M.G., LL.D., Deputy Minister, Public Archives of Canada, for the 1913 Year Book.