

1598. Sable Island, and take on board those whom he had left there; but head winds prevented his landing. Various mischances detained him in France the succeeding years, and prevented his following the enterprise. He was for more than a year prisoner in the hands of the Duke de Mercœur, who was then master in Brittany;¹ and personages of rank, to whom his zeal for the Catholic religion was distasteful, found means to prevent the effects of the king's good-will towards him. The result was, that as he had expended large amounts which had yielded no return, he was no longer in a position to continue them; and it is asserted that he died of chagrin in consequence.²

His error. The fault which he committed was not settling in Acadia, where a single sedentary fishery, which would not have cost him a great deal, would have produced sure and speedy returns. The forty poor wretches whom he left on Sable Island found on the seashore some wrecks of vessels, out of which they built barracks to shield themselves from the severity of the weather. They were the remains of Spanish vessels, which had sailed to settle Cape Breton. From these same ships had come some sheep and cattle, which had multiplied on Sable Island; and this was for some time a resource for these poor exiles. Fish was their next food; and when their clothes

¹ Mr. Pol de Courcy, in the *Biographie Generale des Hommes Illustres de la Bretagne*, shows that this is an error, as Mercœur was not governor of Brittany in 1598. If arrested, it was in 1588; and the voyage to America must have been, he thinks, in 1578, in which year he obtained of Henry III. a commission to explore, and letters patent as governor, lieutenant-general, and vice-roy. Ferland, *Cours d'Histoire*, i. pp. 58-60; *Documents de la Société Historique de Montréal*, i. p. 100. Garneau, in his able history of Canada (i. p. 34, n.), does not find the

arguments of Mr. de Courcy conclusive; and Mr. Faillon does not allude to Mr. de Courcy in his recent work. The patent to the marquis was issued January 12, 1598; but as Mercœur surrendered to the king within two months of that time—the edict of Henry IV., reciting his surrender, bearing date March 26, 1598 (*Mémoires de la Ligue*, Paris, 1599, vi., pp. 625-40) — de la Roche could not have sailed to America, returned, and fallen into Mercœur's hands in 1598.

² Champlain, *Voyages* (ed. 1632), p. 33.