

1628. every reason to hope that New France was about to become a prominent object of ministerial attention, being supported by so powerful a Company.

English
hostilities.

Its institution was marked, however, by an epoch of very ill omen. The first ships sent by it to America were taken by the English,¹ to whom the siege of la Rochelle afforded a pretext for committing hostilities against France, although the two countries were at peace. The next year David Kertk,² a Frenchman born at Dieppe, but a Calvinist refugee in England, instigated it is said by William de Caen, who wished to take revenge for the loss of his exclusive monopoly, penetrated to Tadoussac with a squadron, and sent parties to burn the houses and kill the cattle at Cape Tourmente.³ The man intrusted with this task had orders to proceed then to Quebec and summon the commandant to surrender the fort.⁴

Quebec
summoned
to surren-
der. De
Champlain's
reply.

Mr. de Champlain was there with Mr. de Pontgravé, recently returned from France on business of Mr. de Monts and his society. After deliberating together and sounding the chief settlers, they resolved to make a defence; and Champlain returned so bold an answer to the summons of the English captain, that he deemed it prudent to retire.⁵ Yet they were actually reduced in the town to seven ounces of bread a head each day, and there were not over five

the name of Sebastian Cramoisy, printer to the king, whose press is so familiar to readers of early works relating to Canada.

¹ Creuxius, p. 19.

² This name is variously written—"Qver" (Champlain, 1632, p. 158); "Quer" (ib., p. 157); "Kertk" (ib., p. 219); "Kerque" (Sagard, p. 921); "Kersius" (Creuxius, p. 17). It is, in English documents, "Kyrcke." He was born at Dieppe, of a Scotch father, and was a wine-merchant at Bordeaux and Cognac (Champlain, 1632, pp. 256, 257.)

³ Champ., Voyag. (ed. 1632), p. 455

(155); Sagard, Hist., pp. 916-20. Sagard and Champlain make no such accusation against de Caen, and Failon (*Histoire de la Colonie Française*, i., p. 233) defends de Caen.

⁴ Champlain, Voyages (ed. 1632), p. 157. The English bark returned to Tadoussac, and a shallop brought up the prisoners and Kirk's letter: Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 921-2; Creuxius, Hist., p. 17.

⁵ See the summons—dated July 8, 1628—and Champlain's answer: Champlain, Voyages (1632), p. 157; Sagard, *Histoire du Canada*, pp. 922-4.