

Bay ; but the preceding autumn there took place an action too singular to be omitted in this history. I derive it from a letter of the Marquis de Dénonville, who received intelligence of it on his return from Niagara.

1687.

Exploit of  
two  
Frenchmen  
in Hudson's  
Bay.

Mr. d'Iberville, who was still in command of the forts at the head of the bay, learning that an English ship was caught in the ice near Charleston, a small fort recently thrown up by the English, six leagues from Saint Anne, sent four men to reconnoitre it. One of the four fell sick on the way, and was obliged to return ; the three others were apparently not sufficiently on their guard ; they allowed themselves to be surprised by the crew of the ship. When they least expected it, a volley of musketry was poured on them, though without wounding any of them. They endeavored to fly, but were pursued. One escaped ; the two others were taken and bound, then carried on board and shut up at the bottom of the hold.

When the proper time for navigation came, the master of the ship having been drowned while running on the ice floes, one of which gave way under him, the crew found itself reduced to six men, and was consequently too feeble to work the vessel. They accordingly released one of their two prisoners, choosing the man who seemed to them the least resolute, but they had miscalculated. One day when four Englishmen were busy on the yards, the Frenchman, seeing only two sailors near him, seized an axe unperceived by them, and tomahawked them. He then ran to release his comrade, and the two having armed themselves to the teeth, forced the Englishmen to come down, and secured them. They then sailed for St. Anne, but had not proceeded far when they met Mr. d'Iberville, who, having heard of their detention, was coming to recover or avenge them. The ship which they brought was quite richly laden, and well provided with goods which came quite seasonably to revictual Fort St. Anne, and fill its storehouses.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dénonville to Seignelay, August 25, 1687, N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 344.