

leave Montreal, when an express from the Sieur Provôt, King's lieutenant at Quebec, brought him intelligence from Hudson's Bay, and Acadia, announcing that Fort St. Anne at the head of Hudson's Bay, had been taken by the English, early in July. Three ships of that nation had wintered seventy leagues from that fort, which they approached as soon as navigation opened.¹

1693.

The English take Fort St. Anne, in Hudson's Bay.

They reckoned on finding a weak garrison, but could never have imagined that it contained only four men, one of them in irons. This wretch, in a paroxysm of frenzy, had killed the surgeon of the fort: recovering his sanity, and much troubled at what he had done, he feared that the Jesuit, Father Dalmas, who had been the sole witness, would disclose it, and fear of being punished for an involuntary crime, led him to commit one which rendered him guilty indeed. He killed the missionary, and would have carried his fury further, had they not secured him by putting him in chains.²

The English landed forty men to attack the fort. The three Frenchmen at first killed two, and drove the rest off, but the latter, learning from some Indians the condition of the place, and the number of those defending it, were ashamed to have recoiled before three men; still they did them the honor of sending a hundred against them. Our brave fellows saw how useless their efforts would be against so large a force; but they would not surrender. They left their prisoner in the fort with forty or fifty thousands of peltries, embarked unperceived, in a canoe, and were so fortunate as to reach Quebec, where they found de Frontenac deeply chagrined that the tardiness of the vessels from France, had again entailed the failure of the projected expedition against Fort Nelson.³

Gallant retreat of three Frenchmen

¹ N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 570.

² Guilloré. *Ib.* p. 554.

³ Father Anthony Dalmas came from France in 1670. Sent to Montagnais in 1692. Penetrated to Hudson's Bay by Saguenay. Killed March 3, 1693.

⁴ Marest, *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, vol. x., (1712,) *Travels of Learned Missionaries*, (1714,) p. 256. De la Potherie, iii., p. 187; N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., pp. 554, 567, 570.

⁵ Marest says that of five who set out, three died on the way.