

1997. Such were the instructions given to de Nesmond and sent to Frontenac for an expedition in which the King was so interested, that he permitted the former to increase his fleet with the vessels intended for Hudson Bay in case he found them at Placentia and deemed their aid necessary.

As no intelligence of the siege of Naxoat had reached court when these instructions were drawn up, but arrived soon after, de Nesmond, on anchoring in the harbor of Rochelle, found later orders there, to give the Chevalier de Villebon all the aid in men and munitions necessary to hold or restore that post, and as soon as he anchored in the Bay of Placentia, a letter was handed to him from the Count de Pontchartrain, in which that minister informed him that eighteen English ships loaded with salt were to clear at once from Portugal, and to sail, escorted by a man-of-war, to Newfoundland for the codfishery, and that he was to do his best not to miss them.

What
defeated
the
enterprise.

He also added, that if Nesmond succeeded in defeating the enemy's fleet, it was the King's intention that he should cruise along the eastern shore of Newfoundland, to take or burn all the English vessels he might find there; but de Nesmond had sailed too late to execute so many and so important enterprises. Moreover head-winds kept him more than two months at sea, so that he did not reach Placentia till July 24th.

There, learning nothing of the English, he held a grand council of war, to deliberate whether it was advisable to proceed at once to Boston; all voted against it, on the ground that it was imprudent to take any step without having information as to the enemy's operations, and that no matter what expedition was used to inform the Count de Frontenac, the Canadian troops could not reach Pentagoët before the 10th of September; by which time the fleet, which had provisions for only fifty days, would be in no condition to undertake anything.

These arguments were unanswerable, and de Nesmond yielded to them, deeply chagrined to see a conquest slip from his hands, after its success had at first seemed to