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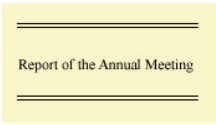

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THE EVOLUTION OF MONTREAL UNDER THE FRENCH REGIME

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THE city of Montreal stands on an island in the River St. Lawrence, some thirty miles long and ten miles broad, the largest of a very considerable group of islands which block the entrance of the Ottawa River into the main stream. Of these only three others are of any size, the Ile Perrot, the Ile Bizard, and the Ile Jésus, the latter lying between the Island of Montreal and the north shore of the river. In consequence, it may fairly be said that the Ottawa, which has been in the past one of the main routes to the North-West and the Great Lakes, flows into the St. Lawrence through four channels: one of little value, to the west of the Ile Perrot; another between the Ile Perrot and the Island of Montreal which, though interrupted by a small rapid, has always been part of the main trade route up the Ottawa; a third, the Rivière des Prairies, between the Ile Jésus and the Island of Montreal; this, though also interrupted by rapids, has been regularly used by both canoes and lumber rafts; and a fourth between the Ile Jésus and the mainland which contains many small islands and has never been of much value for navigation. Thus Montreal stands not only on the trade route up the St. Lawrence, but also at the beginning of that up the Ottawa. Furthermore, it lies at the head of navigation on the St. Lawrence itself, for just above it are the Lachine Rapids which have always been an insuperable obstacle even for canoes. Finally, only a few miles to the south of Montreal is the valley of the Richelieu which leads to Lake Champlain, to the country of the Iroquois, and to the great trade route along the Hudson River running down to the sea at New York.

The first white man to reach the spot where Montreal now stands was Jacques Cartier who, in his account of his second voyage, describes how on Saturday, October 2, 1535 he landed there in order to visit the Indian village of Hochelaga, a short distance inland; on his way he observed that, as he says, "The country was the finest and most excellent one could find anywhere" and as they approached the village "the land began to be cultivated. It was fine land with large fields covered with the corn of the country"; and adjacent to the village lay a mountain which Cartier named "Mount Royal."[1]

Jacques Cartier was an explorer not a colonist, and however much he may have admired the country, he did nothing more than survey its rolling forests from the top of Mount Royal.[2] For nearly seventy years it was hidden from the eye of the white man and then in July, 1603 came Samuel de Champlain, only to find that Hochelaga had vanished before the fear of attack by hostile Indians. He also admired the land; he found, to quote his own words, that "the climate there is milder and more

[1]H. P. Biggar, *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier* (Publications of the Public Archives of Canada, no. 11, 1924), 152-4. There is no good evidence to support the view of M. Beaugrand-Champagne that Hochelaga lay on the other side of the island near the Rivière des Prairies (*Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 1923); see the article by M. Lanctot on this subject (*ibid.*, 1930, sect. I, 115-41).

[2]Biggar, *Voyages of Jacques Cartier*, 168-9.

equable, and the soil better than in any place I had seen, with trees and fruit in great quantity."[3] And Champlain also notes what was to prove one of the great disadvantages of the site of the future Montreal—the St. Mary's current that still rushes along the shore past St. Helen's Island, just opposite the city, and does not fade into the even flow of the river for several miles: "although we had the wind very favorable," he writes, "yet we could not with all our might make any great way."[4] And again on his second visit he notices regretfully that to this spot "pinnaces and shallops can ascend easily . . . only with a strong wind, or by going a round about way, on account of the strong current."[5]

Champlain was more than a mere explorer, he was looking for a suitable place where a post might be established in order to maintain contact with the Indians; hence his second journey to the Island of Montreal in May, 1611. On this occasion he wandered over the whole countryside and, as he says, "having examined very carefully and found this spot to be one of the finest on the river, I ordered the trees of the Place Royale to be cut down and cleared off, in order to level the ground and make it ready for building. Water can be made to encircle the place very easily, and a little island formed of it, on which to erect such an establishment as one may wish. Some twenty yards from the Place Royale lies a small island about a hundred yards long, where a good strong dwelling might be built. There are also many level stretches of a very good rich potter's clay for brickmaking and building, which is a great convenience."[6] What Champlain named the Place Royale is the small triangular piece of land formed by the entrance of the little river St. Pierre[7] into the St. Lawrence, and later to be known as the Pointe-à-Callières. It is extremely interesting to notice how Champlain's trained intelligence observed almost all the advantages and disadvantages that were to mark the early development of Montreal: the strong current that made access to it difficult for sailing ships and rowboats alike; the pleasant land which the Indians had cleared and where, as he said, "one might sow grain and do gardening," and on June 2 he did sow some seeds and watched them come up with perfect success; the fruit that was to be found in profusion—plums, cherries, strawberries, vines, nuts; the abundance of fish and game-birds;[8] the facilities for building; the danger from floods, a danger that he feared so much that he had an experimental wall built—"to see how it would last during the winter when the waters came down"[9]—though he thought the land was high enough to prevent disaster; the strategic position where Indians would naturally pause after their struggle with the rapids on the Ottawa or the St. Lawrence; here again his judgment was sound for he had been on the island only a few days when Indians actually began to arrive, anxious to exchange furs for the treasures of the white men. And finally he fully realized that the place must be easy to defend and in his anxiety to make certain of this, he even went so far as to suggest building his strong town on St.

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[3]H. P. Biggar, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain* (Champlain Society, 1922-36), I, 152-3.
[4]*Ibid.*, I, 148.
[5]*Ibid.*, II, 175-6.
[6]*Ibid.*, II, 177-9.
[7]The river St. Pierre ran down along the line of the modern William Street.
[8]Biggar, *Works of Champlain*, II, 176-7.
[9]*Ibid.*, 178-9.

Helen's Island in the middle of the St. Lawrence.[10] But all this forethought proved useless; Champlain certainly returned in 1613, but nothing was built[11] and Montreal was to lie desolate for another thirty years. Yet his eulogies were not altogether wasted, for the account of his second voyage was published in 1613 and was almost certainly the narrative that inspired the actual founders of Montreal with a determination, as Dollier de Casson wrote thirty years later, to convert the Indians by establishing there "a fine French colony which could give the natives a taste for a more civilised life."[12]

On December 17, 1640, the Company of New France, commonly known as the Company of One Hundred Associates, granted the greater part of the Island of Montreal to Pierre Chevrier, Sieur de Fancamp, and to Jérôme le Royer, Sieur de la Dauversière;[13] these two were acting on behalf of a group of men who, under the title of "Messieurs les associés pour la conversion des Sauvages de la Nouvelle-France en L'Ile de Montréal," were proposing to establish a small colony on the island.[14] The rest of the island was granted to them on April 21, 1659, and on March 9, 1663 they handed over all their rights to the Seminary of St. Sulpice in Paris.[15] But long before this, the first settlement had been made and the town of Montreal founded. In 1641 a small band of about fifty settlers had been sent out under the leadership of Paul de Chomedy, Sieur de Maisonneuve. They reached Quebec late in the season; a fresh war had just broken out with the Iroquois, and the officials at Quebec painted their future, if they persisted, in the blackest possible colours. Therefore Maisonneuve contented himself with a mere reconnaissance, reaching the Island of Montreal on October 15, 1641 in company with the Governor of New France, M. de Montmagny.[16] He returned to Quebec a few days later, spent the winter there and in the following spring led his little band, now about fifty-four strong, up the St. Lawrence.[17] On May 17, 1642 he took formal possession of the land the company had granted. His companion, Jeanne Mance, describes how, as soon as he had disembarked, he "threw himself upon his knees to adore God in that savage place, and all his company with him."[18] Father Vimont, who accompanied the expedition, chanted the Veni Creator, said Mass, and exposed the Blessed Sacrament.[19] Jeanne Mance, from

[10] *Ibid.*, 179.

[11] *Ibid.*, 252-4.

[12] "Une belle colonie Française qui leur pouvait faire sucer un lait moins barbare" (Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, ed. R. Flenley, Toronto, 1928, 62).

[13] *Edits, Ordonnances Royaux* (Quebec, 1854), I, 20-3.

[14] *Ibid.*, 26-7.

[15] *Ibid.*, 29-30, 93-7.

[16] R. G. Thwaites (ed.), *Jesuit Relations* (Cleveland, 1876-1901), XXII, 211-13, "Relation of 1642 by Rev. Father Vimont"; Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, 89-93.

[17] E. Z. Massicotte, "Les colons de Montréal, 1642-1667" (*Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 1913, sect. I, 4).

[18] Morin, *Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu* (Société historique de Montréal, 1921), XII, 61.

[19] Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, XXII, 211-13. Morin in "Le Date de la fondation de Montréal (*Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, 1936, 362-72, 396-410) maintains that probably the landing was made on May 18 and not on May 17, and that certainly the mass was said on May 18; his arguments appear quite unsound and are largely the result of following a baseless hypothesis first put forward by Faillon that Maisonneuve reached merely the lower end of the island and not the site of Montreal on May 17. The case for May 17 as the correct date for the foundation of Montreal is admirably put by A. Saint Pierre in his article "Le 17 ou le 18" (*Report of the Canadian Historical Association*, 1936, 109-114).

whose memory the events of those first few days could never have faded, tells a charming story of how, some days later, after they had built their little square chapel, they had no oil for a lamp; and so fireflies were set in a glass vial before the Sacrament and they shone "as clearly and as brightly throughout the night as if there had been several little candles alight within."[20] The settlers had landed on the spot that Champlain had cleared and named the Place Royale; the protection afforded by the St. Lawrence and its little tributary, the St. Pierre, appealed strongly to them and there they set to work to erect a stockade to enclose the few simple houses that were to lodge the whole colony and the primitive chapel built of bark in which they were to worship. On July 28 a small party of Algonquins appeared, and their chieftain brought his son, aged four, to be baptised—the first convert to be made by the new colonists; the relationship between Frenchman and Indian is here not yet one of trade, but of missionary enterprise.[21]

Three hundred years later it is difficult to speak with certainty as to the motives that animated any group of men, for the reasons alleged in grants and charters do not necessarily tell the whole truth, but all the evidence that survives goes to show that the "Messieurs . . . pour la conversion des Sauvages" lived up to their name, and throughout were inspired by religious motives and by religious motives alone. When Father Vimont sets out to explain the reasons for the choice of Montreal as the site of their settlement he, like Champlain, certainly describes its natural advantages, how it "gives access and an admirable approach to all the Nations of this vast country . . . so that, if peace prevailed among these peoples they would land thereon from all sides"; but does he suggest, as Champlain does, that this will provide a profitable trade? Not at all, for he goes on to speak of the motives of the colonists: "Their intention is to have houses built in which to lodge the savages, to till the soil in order to feed them; to establish seminaries for their instruction and an Hôtel-Dieu for succouring their sick."[22] There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of all this, though the purity of their religious philanthropy was of short duration: it is significant that, when Dollier de Casson—also, let it be noted, an ecclesiastic—is writing only thirty years later of the physical advantages which led its founders to the site of Montreal, he unconsciously reveals the change in public opinion when he speaks enthusiastically of its "Convenience for trade . . . there is no doubt that the spot is one of the best in the country for the inhabitants, because of the trade they can do there with the savages who come down the river in canoes thereto, from all the nations living higher up."[23]

If I have described at undue length the earliest days of the settlement, it has been with the view of showing the very real religious feelings that animated its original settlers. Of course this state of things did not last: the prospect of wealth from trading in furs soon led some of them to season piety with profits; the pressing need for new colonists to recruit the declining strength of the settlement led to the bringing out of anyone who would consent to come; his motives were not important if his arms

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[20]Morin, *Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu*, 63.

[21]Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, XXII, 213-15; Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, 97-101; Morin, *Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu*, 63-4.

[22]Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, XXII, 207-9.

[23]Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, 101.

were strong. But to the moment of his forced retirement in 1665 from the position of Governor of Montreal, all are agreed as to the simplicity of life and disregard of profit on the part of their leader, Maisonneuve. "His disinterestedness was so perfect," writes Mère Juchereau, "that he never appropriated to himself the least thing from among the considerable presents that the savages gave him; he distributed them all to the soldiers of his garrison and to the inhabitants of the town."[24] And Sœur Morin bears witness to the fact that he might have made a large fortune by a perfectly honest trade in beaver skins, but he had no care for such things.[25] Therefore it is not unfair to claim that Montreal was founded as the result of religious motives alone, and that the first inhabitants were, in the main, induced to settle there by similar motives rather than by any hope of profit. It is worth emphasizing this, not only because Montreal is the only large town in North America that has originated in this manner, but also because it shows how dangerous is the study of economic and physical environment if it be divorced from the parallel study of historical evidence. In the case of Montreal, such a superficial view would inevitably have led one to the conclusion that its foundation was the result of its admirable position in regard to the Indian trade and, as I have shown, this was by no means the case.

It has always been asserted or at least implied by modern writers that the purity of the earlier days began to vanish with the sending to Montreal in 1665 of the Carignan-Salières Regiment in order that the country might be more adequately protected from Iroquois raiders. This, however, is hardly the case. If Maisonneuve resisted the lure of trade with the Indians and the profits that it brought, the same cannot be said of his followers. Fresh settlers were arriving and, unless they were professional ecclesiastics, it was very rarely spiritual motives that drove them across the Atlantic. Jacques Le Ber, for example, may stand high in French-Canadian annals for his piety, but he was a merchant and a fur trader, who intrigued and struggled to maintain his grip upon the more profitable parts of the business that flowed through Montreal, a successful *parvenu* who was certainly given letters of nobility by Louis XIV in 1696, but who paid 6000 livres to get them.[26] Or to instance another leading member of this little community in the second half of the seventeenth century: Charles Le Moyne was the son of an innkeeper at Dieppe, who early learnt the ways and the language of the Indians, and who had his house and shop in the rue St. Paul, the earliest street to be built in Montreal, running back of the common land along the shore of and parallel with the St. Lawrence. There he transacted a very profitable business with the citizens, and there he stored the furs he bought from the Indians, but as early as 1657 he was acquiring large stretches of land on the opposite side of the river and by 1672 he had built up the great Seigneury of Longueuil. He was ennobled in 1668, but it was not until after his death—he died in February, 1685—that the title of Baron de Longueuil was conferred upon his son Charles, to whom he had left his seigneury.[27]

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[24]Mère Juchereau, *Histoire de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec*, 124-5, quoted by Faillon, *Histoire de la colonie française en Canada* (Paris, 1865-6), III, 111-12.

[25]Morin, *Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu*, 79-80.

[26]Faillon, *Vie de Mlle le Ber*, 319-22, 325.

[27]Jodoin and Vincent, *Longueuil*, 7, 20, 34-5, 41-9, 72, 76, 77; W. B. Munro, *Documents relating to Seigniorial Tenure in Canada*, 66-9; *Archives de Québec: Lettres de noblesse*, I, 264-7; *Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, 1915, 48.

Certainly as early as 1669 Le Ber and Le Moyne were acting in co-operation, for in that year they acquired the farm that had been held by the explorer La Salle, and which was situated at Lachine, just west of Montreal and above the rapids.[28] This co-operation they continued when they purchased jointly in 1679 the fief later named Senneville lying at the extreme west end of the Island of Montreal. They held this until 1683 when, upon an agreement to dissolve their loose partnership, Le Ber acquired it as his share of the common possessions.[29] It was no accident, however, that Le Moyne almost immediately purchased for a song the Ile Perrot lying still a little farther to the west.[30]

What is the significance of all this in the development of Montreal? It is to be found in the fact that it is part of a general competitive movement to skim the cream from the fur trade by anticipating the Montreal market. A sort of fair was held in Montreal in the late spring of each year to which the Indians were accustomed to resort in very considerable numbers; they set up their little cabins on the strand; and at first in the old market place, the Place Royale, and later even along the stockaded wall the merchants of the town set out their goods in booths and bargained for furs.[31] It was obvious, however, that if some enterprising trader could catch the Indians before they reached Montreal and listened to the ever-increasing offers of his competitors, he could lure the unsuspecting savages into some wonderful bargains. That is just what Le Ber and Le Moyne were doing when they went to Lachine; others soon followed, therefore they pushed a little further west, along the route the Indians must follow on their journey down to Montreal. Soon there was along the shore of the St. Lawrence west of the city a whole row of these fur traders, disguised as seigneurs if they were big men, as farmers if they were small ones. The real example for this policy had, however, been set not by a merchant but by a royal official, Perrot, the Governor of Montreal, whose henchman, Réné Cuillerier, had settled at Lachine, as early as 1670, and who in October, 1672, had himself gained the grant of the island which now bears his name, the Ile Perrot, solely in order to establish a post there under his lieutenant, de Brucy, with a view to purchasing the best furs at the cheapest rates.[32] And even Frontenac, the Governor of New France, was not above taking a hand in the game: in 1673 he built Fort Cataraqui which tapped the fur trade down the St. Lawrence and so anticipated the Montreal merchants, even though it left untouched the very valuable business that came down the Ottawa. As Perrot had outplayed Le Ber and Le Moyne, so Frontenac overreached Perrot; and it is interesting to note that Le Ber, who in 1673 was on the side of Frontenac against Perrot, had hoped to obtain the fur monopoly at Fort Cataraqui. When this was given to La Salle, who had long worked with Frontenac, Le Ber at once became his bitter trade rival, no doubt now regarding Frontenac

[28]Girouard, *Lake St. Louis*, 15.
[29]Faillon, *Vie de Mlle le Ber*, 319-22.
[30]Jodoin and Vincent, *Longueuil*, 80.
[31]"Extrait d'un mémoire sur le Canada adressé au Comte du Pontchartrain par le Roy de la Potherie" in Margry, *Mémoires et documents*, V, 185-6; Charlevoix, *Journal d'un voyage fait . . . dans l'Amérique septentrionale* (1744), 142-3 (this is vol. III of his *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*); *Archives de Québec: Ordonnances des Gouverneurs et Intendants, 1639-1706*, II, 14-16.
[32]Girouard, *Lake St. Louis*, 43, 208-11; Quebec Archives, Régistre d'Intendance, no. 1, fo. 5.

as a much more dangerous competitor than Perrot, for Perrot's imprisonment by Frontenac in 1674 was not wholly unconnected with the appearance of the latter in the Montreal fur trade.[33] So there emerge in Montreal in the seventies and the eighties hostile fur-trading cliques, rivals not only in anticipating the Montreal market, but also for the control of posts that were being built up country and for the profits of the direct trade with the Indian settlements by means of coureurs de bois; to this last development reference will be made later.

It was natural that this anticipation of the Montreal fur market should be called to the attention of the Intendant. In February, 1683, the intercepting of Indian or other fur traders on their way down to Montreal was forbidden by ordinance, and this prohibition was repeated in May, 1685, and again in August, 1685, though it looks as though a few of the larger men like Le Ber and Le Moyne had been using some of their considerable influence to obtain preferential treatment, for seigneurs were to be allowed to entertain and have commerce with the Indians on their seigneuries as often as they pleased.[34] Even as late as May, 1708, this same prohibition was repeated,[35] but it never seems to have been very effective. Time, however, brought its revenges, and in 1701 M. de la Potherie reported that "there was trouble in Montreal among the merchants, who were in despair at this establishment [a post at Detroit]"; among others "M. Le Ber, the richest trader in the country . . . cried out against this experiment."[36] He was being beaten at his own game.

What does this mean? It is really the symbol of a great change in the economic position of Montreal. We have seen how in early days the Indians came down every year to sell their furs in the fair between the settlement and the shore of the river. But competition to this straightforward business was rapidly growing and this competition to forestall trade rivals and purchase furs at bargain rates was not limited merely to the gradual westward movement which I have already described. Habitants, dissatisfied with the laborious round of their daily lives, left their farms and ranged the woods as coureurs de bois, trading with the Indians and so tapping the fur trade, as it were, at its source. And this development was not merely the result of individual restlessness; it was caused by necessity. The destruction of the Hurons by the Iroquois in 1649-50, the cutting of the trade routes down the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa by their raiding parties, killed the fur trade. Father Le Mercier, writing in 1663, said, "For a year the warehouse of Montreal has not bought a single Beaver skin from the savages." If the Indians could not come to Montreal, Montreal must go to the Indians. "All our young Frenchmen are planning to go on a trading expedition, to find the Natives that are scattered here and there; and they hope to come back laden with the Beaverskins of several years accumulation."[37] Coureurs de bois set forth more vigorously than ever before, to save the newly established Compagnie des Habitants from

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[33]E. Wardleworth, "François-Marie Perrot" (thesis for M.A. at McGill), 84-7, 101-4, 122, 146, 180-5.

[34]*Archives de Québec: Ordonnances des Gouverneurs et Intendants, 1639-1706*, II, 14-16, 107-8, 122-3.

[35]*Archives de Québec: Ordonnances des Intendants*, I, 57.

[36]"Extrait d'un mémoire . . . par le Roy de la Potherie" printed in Margry, *Mémoires et documents*, V, 181.

[37]Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, XL, 211-15.

complete collapse. Moreover, as early as 1673 the Hudson Bay Company was also tapping the source of fur, for it was easier and more profitable for the western Indians to take their beaver skins to Fort Albany or Fort Moose on James Bay than to the distant Montreal; the only way for the French merchants to meet this threat was to send out coureurs de bois to trade with the Indians in their settlements, or to establish French posts in the up-country that would provide the Indian with a market close at hand and so persuade him not to visit the English, even though they paid more for his beaver skins and gave him goods that he liked better. Both these expedients were adopted, and with success.[38]

Merchants in Montreal, seeing the possibilities offered by the coureurs de bois, sought out men who wished to combine profit with adventure, and hired them to procure furs, sometimes on a wage basis, more often probably, on a loose understanding, by which they sold their furs to the merchant at a specially cheap rate and the merchant possibly provided some of their equipment in return—a sort of profit-sharing system. Before very long, it became common for the merchant who had secured a *congé* to trade, to supply the goods for barter and to take half the profits, the voyageurs sharing the other half among themselves.[39]

To all this both government and church objected very strongly; ordinances were issued,[40] the Intendant Duchesneau was especially bitter against this practice but, as he says, "I have enacted ordinances against the Coureurs de bois; against the merchants who furnish them with goods; against the gentlemen and others who harbour them. . . . All that has been in vain, in as much as several of the most considerable families in this country are interested therein."[41] It was felt that all this wandering unsettled the habitants, gave them wrong ideas when they ought to be content to live peaceful lives and clear the land and till their farms, even that, as Duchesneau complains, "their absence gave rise to licentiousness among their wives";[42] it was feared also that it might disorganize the fur trade, that sooner or later it would teach the Indians the possibility of buying in a cheap market and selling in a dear one, for it showed them how much their furs were coveted. Charlevoix, writing in 1721, complains of the avidity of the coureurs de bois which "has lowered the price of our commodities and raised that of their peltry."[43] And it might even lead Indians and coureurs alike to play Dutch or English off against French, to seek the higher price offered at Orange

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[38]G. de T. Glazebrook, *History of Transportation in Canada*, 14, 22-4.

[39]*Mémoire par Nicholas Perrot*, ed. R. P. J. Tailhan (1864), 297-9, quoting from "Mémoire historique sur les mauvais effets de la réunion des castors dans une même main" addressed to the Comte de Pontchartrain in 1705; Bacqueville de la Potherie, *Histoire de l'Amérique septentrionale* (1753), II, 142. Later on, in the eighteenth century, the merchant's profit was reckoned to be about 30 per cent. In the seventeenth century the term "coureurs de bois" was applied loosely and generally to all Frenchmen who were ready to seek the Indians in order to obtain furs. In later years it tended to be restricted to illegal traders and private adventurers, and men working for or with merchants were called "voyageurs" and "engagés," the "voyageur" being the man in charge of a canoe and the "engagés" being the paddlers; but right to the end of the French régime these three terms were often confused.

[40]E.g., on Jan 20, 1703 (*Archives de Québec: Ordonnances des Gouverneurs et Intendants, 1639-1706*, II, 315-16).

[41]E. B. O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documents relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, IX, 131-3, Duchesneau to M. de Seignelay, Nov. 10, 1679.

[42]*Ibid.*

[43]Charlevoix, *Journal d'un voyage . . . dans l'Amérique septentrionale*, 143.

or elsewhere in the Hudson valley.[44] Indeed, some of the Montreal merchants themselves were not above securing greater profits by sending their furs to the English instead of to France.[45]

This was the government's side of the case; what had the Catholic Church to say? She saw in the ventures of the coureurs de bois after furs a desperate blow at her whole Indian policy which was based upon an attempt to keep the white men away from the natives. Not only did the white men tend to adopt Indian ways, to take Indian wives without benefit of clergy and to fail in proper reverence to the church, but they taught the white men's vices to the Indians, and especially did they take them brandy to barter for furs. It was bad enough that the Indians could procure strong drink in Montreal where its sale might be controlled, though, as we shall see later, even in enforcing this control the church failed, but that it should be smuggled into the Indian villages was anathema. Here the government and the chief officials and merchants did not always see eye to eye with the church: at any cost they wanted to control the fur trade; brandy was undoubtedly the best lure for the Indians that they knew; therefore in its fight against Indian drunkenness the church never really had any constant lay support. And indeed the church itself was faced, as was pointed out in 1678, with the unpleasant alternative of giving the Indians brandy and the true faith in New France, or leaving them to be attracted to the English settlement where they would imbibe heresy with their rum. This so-called Brandy Parliament of 1678 is worthy of some attention, for it shows the economic position of the Indian trade to a nicety. The church wants prohibition of all sale of brandy to the Indians on moral grounds; the government is torn between the conflicting claims of morality and trade, and compromises in the ordinance of May 22, 1683, when people are forbidden to carry brandy to the west end of the Island of Montreal to sell there to the savages on their way down stream "in order to try and make them drunk and so overreach them in trading with them,"[46] as the ordinance says. The big Montreal merchants want to prevent their rivals, the coureurs de bois, from selling strong drink, but desire to be allowed to sell it themselves in Montreal and so maintain the flow of furs uninterruptedly to the island; all the others want unrestricted sale.[47] Soon, however, as we have seen, these differences were reconciled: the church continued to fight, but the government lent it little real support, while the merchants themselves employed more and more canoemen, fur traders, voyageurs, and the government recognized the situation by issuing *congés* or permissions to trade up country to those prepared to pay for them. Although the granting of these *congés* was abolished in 1696, a limited number was allowed between 1716 and 1719, and from 1726 onwards their grant became usual once more, as the conditions of the fur trade had so changed as to render them necessary.[48]

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[44]O'Callaghan, *Documents relative to the Colonial History of New York*, IX, 408-9, "Differences in the Indian Trade between Montreal and Orange 1689."

[45]Girouard, *Lake St. Louis*, 208-9; Report by Gédèon de Catalogne (Nov. 7, 1712) printed in Munro, *Documents relating to Seigniorial Tenure*, 98; Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade out of New France, 1713-1760" (*Report of the Canadian Historical Association*, 1939, 61-76).

[46]*Archives de Québec: Ordonnance des Gouverneurs et Intendants, 1639-1706*, II, 37-8.

[47]W. B. Munro, "The Brandy Parliament" (*Canadian Historical Review*, II, 172-89).

[48]I. Caron, *La Colonisation du Canada*, 76.

What was the effect of these developments on Montreal? By the end of the seventeenth century the economic situation had defined itself. The Indians were no longer coming to Montreal to sell their furs; as Charlevoix said in 1721 after describing the past glories of the fur fair, "There are still now and then companies or rather flotillas of Indians arriving at Montreal, but nothing in comparison with what used to resort hither."[49] Instead, such furs as reached the city were being purchased by coureurs, by merchants, or by officers of the Crown. Between 1670 and 1760 nearly fourteen thousand men made contracts at Montreal alone to go trading for furs in the backwoods with the Indians.[50] But even so, it was felt that the trade was not nearly as great as it ought to have been: the Iroquois wars interfered with it seriously; English competition was growing very rapidly, not only because the Iroquois were trying to act as middlemen for the western Indians and divert the trade through their lands to the English in the Mohawk and Hudson valleys, but also because the Indians liked the English cloth that they received in exchange—the "strouds" and the "scarlets"—better than they did the French; and above all the English gave higher prices for the furs. They could do this, since they appear to have realized better than did the French, the advantages of smaller but more frequent profits, and also because the French goods were actually dearer to the French merchants in consequence of the great discount on the Canadian card money;[51] they were even a good deal dearer in Montreal than they were in Quebec.[52]

Consequently by about 1700 Montreal economically was no longer a town of small traders, of fur fairs and Indian barter, but a city of merchants, a base for adventures into the wilds, even a city of bright lights to which Indians and voyageurs alike came to drink and gamble away their profits. Moreover, the way had already been prepared for the final stage under the French régime—the setting up of military posts up country. At first these might have been established as a defence against hostile Indians, but almost at once the economic factor became important; not only was there a desire to hold trade routes against the competition of the English and their Indian allies, but the French were anxious to impress the Indians with their value as friends, and to establish posts to which furs might be more easily brought and from which traders might cover the surrounding country. Hence the alarm of Le Ber and other leading merchants at the establishment of Detroit which I mentioned above. It looked as though, with the penetration westward, the merchants of Montreal would lose their splendid profits unless they could send up canoes with goods and agents to gather in the furs at the western posts.

Nor was this all. From the very beginning the officers of the Crown in New France had done a good deal of private trading with the Indians. We have seen how Perrot, the Governor of Montreal, used his position, and even the officers under him, to set up a trading post on Ile Perrot. "He is ruining the country and its trade, he carries on business publicly,

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[49]Charlevoix, *Journal d'un voyage . . . dans l'Amérique septentrionale*, 142-3.

[50]E. Z. Massicotte, *Auberges et cabarets d'autrefois*, 108-9.

[51]Report of Gédèon de Catalogne of Nov. 7, 1712, printed in Munro, *Documents relating to Seigniorial Tenure*, 149.

[52]In 1743 prices were 25 per cent higher in Montreal than in Quebec; see letter from Varin, printed in H. A. Innis, *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History*, 413.

he even possesses a shop on the common," says an indignant memoir of 1681, probably written by the Intendant Duchesneau,[53] "He authorises his servants and his soldiers to carry on the fur trade in the camps of the Indians. He forces them to sell him their furs and the people of the colony get only what is left." His activities cut into the profits of the private trade that Frontenac, the Governor of New France, was also carrying on, though in a slightly more respectable manner, and hence bitter strife arose between them with the result that Perrot was ultimately disgraced. In this struggle the Montreal merchants took sides with a view to increasing their profits at the expense of their government competitors; one finds, for instance, Le Moyne and Le Ber intriguing to oust the explorer La Salle from his trading posts, because La Salle was supported by Frontenac,[54] and there can clearly be discerned at least two constantly shifting groups of trading rivals in Montreal, fighting for control of the fur trade, fighting for spheres of influence among the tribes of the new west. In 1685 Denonville writes plaintively about Tonty and La Salle who were Frontenac's protégés and therefore Denonville's enemies: "I am told that M. de Tonty will not allow our Frenchmen to trade in the Illinois country. If the King has given to M. de La Salle the land all for himself, it would be desirable that I should be told about it, so that I may carry out the orders of his Majesty."[55] But before very long a variety of posts were being set up in the west, each under a military officer whose nominal business was the command of the small garrison and the protection of French interests and French traders. In fact, however, in most cases he rapidly became the bitter rival of the private trader. He used his official position not only to hamper his competitors, but to bully the Indians into letting him have the best furs at the cheapest rates. In 1752 Franquet, who was sent out to New France as royal inspector of forts and other military works, complained bitterly that these officers were so busy making their fortunes by trade that they neglected their military duties and "There are very few of them who do not set up a trading shop . . . when they are sent off to their posts."[56] Pouchot writing a little later says there are only three sorts of Indian trade: the king's official trade, that done by his officers at various lesser posts, and that of the coureurs de bois who adventure into the Indian villages and might do very well if they could afford to purchase goods at first hand.[57]

Therefore by the end of the French régime the economic position of Montreal has again completely changed. It is no longer the place of exchange with the Indians for their furs; the period of simple barter on the part of the ordinary citizen to whose doorstep, as it were, the Indian brought his furs has come completely to an end. It is not even the place from which adventurous coureurs de bois can set out to make great profits. The fur trade has, from Montreal's point of view, become a highly organized business. It still, of course, gives a livelihood to many small

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[53]Quoted in C. Bertrand, *Histoire de Montréal*, from Archives de la Marine, Collection Moreau St. Méry, Mémoires fo. 76.

[54]Atherton, *History of Montreal*, I, 273-4.

[55]Denonville to Seignelay, Sept. 13, 1685, quoted in Tailhan (ed.), *Mémoire par Nicholas Perrot*, 303.

[56]Franquet, *Voyages et mémoires sur le Canada* (Québec, 1889), 29-30, 56.

[57]Pouchot, *Memoirs upon the Late War in North America between the French and English, 1755-60*; quoted by Atherton, *History of Montreal*, I, 372-5.

men: canoemen, agents, and the like; those connected with the provisioning and equipping of the up-country posts, of the voyages made in the interests of big merchants or of the Company of the Indies; in that sense Franquet in 1752 can still say that all the inhabitants of Montreal are concerned in the trade of the upper country.[58] And Indians still come to Montreal, but almost entirely to hold councils with the French, to receive presents or to get drunk. The real profits of the trade are being made by the officers in the western posts, by the company, by the large merchants, possibly even by lucky buyers somewhere in the wilderness of the Great Lakes. In other words, Montreal has emerged from the primitive economic conditions of savage life into the position of a distributing centre, a warehouse, to a certain degree a financial headquarters, an entrepôt in the modern sense of the term.

It might well have been imagined that such a development would have been accompanied by attempts to overcome some of the disadvantages of Montreal's position, or at least to improve its advantages. In fact, very little was done. From Quebec the St. Lawrence still provided the major means of communication: by water in summer, over the ice in winter; and in the summer if the winds were adverse it might take a whole month to do the journey up the river and back again to Quebec.[59] It was not until October, 1735 that a road was made all the way from Quebec to Montreal and the grand voyer, Lanoullier de Boisclère, wrote that he did the journey in four and a half days;[60] the road was, however, used only for passenger travel and the river remained the regular route for freighting goods. But under the French and indeed for years after the English had taken control, there was no harbour at Montreal, and no wharves; ships just ran alongside the shelving banks of the stream and goods were carried down planks to the shore or transferred into small boats—a method that was fraught with considerable inconvenience. The French, moreover, never appreciated the possibilities of the St. Lawrence; the vessels that came up to Montreal were small—they did not exceed eighty tons—and the appearance of the twenty-gun ship that Murray brought up the river when the English captured the city in 1760 struck the inhabitants with amazement.[61] It was this use of small ships that probably in part accounted for the heavy increase in the cost of goods between Quebec and Montreal. Moreover the difficulty of the St. Mary's current just below the city could not be tackled at all by the French, and it persisted all through the English régime and is a factor that has to be considered even today.

Above Montreal lay the Lachine Rapids and very early some sort of road was made from the city along the shore round the rapids so that goods could be carried up over land and then loaded into canoes at Lachine; but Dollier de Casson, the Superior of the Sulpician Seminary that was lord of the island, felt that more than this ought to be done. As early as 1680 he advanced a scheme to dig a canal for canoes round the rapids to Montreal, with a view not only of aiding navigation, but

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[58]Franquet, *Voyages et mémoires sur le Canada*, 56.
[59]Letter from Dupuy of Oct. 20, 1727, printed in Innis, *Select Documents*, 396.
[60]*Ibid.*, 396-7.
[61]Johnstone, "Mémoires," printed in French in *Historical Documents* of Quebec Literary and Historical Society, series 9, 175, or in English in *Collection des manuscrits*, IV, 261; John Knox, *An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America* (Champlain Society), I, 358; II, 468, 473, 503.

also of providing power to turn mills for grinding corn, those already in existence being unable to meet the demand. This combination of navigation and power is an interesting foreshadowing of modern policy. By 1689 digging had actually been started, but Tronson, Dollier's superior in France, thought the scheme too expensive, money began to fail and the Iroquois wars intervened. In February, 1700 Tronson died; work could be once more resumed, and on October 30 Dollier entered into a contract with the engineer Gédèon de Catalogne to complete the canal so that it should be twelve feet broad and at least twelve inches deep even at low water in the St. Lawrence; the seminary was to provide all necessary tools and to pay 9000 livres "cours du pays"; in return de Catalogne undertook to finish the job by June, 1701. This he did not succeed in doing, an unexpected ridge of rock upsetting his plans, and Dollier's death in September, 1701 stopped the work, though water had actually commenced to run through and de Catalogne estimated that the canal needed to be dug only to the depth of three feet more for a distance of between 2,000 and 2,500 feet in order to enable canoes to pass. About 20,000 livres had already been spent; the Sulpicians were not wealthy and, though during the next thirty years several reports were made on the project, nothing was ever done, as the expense seemed prohibitive;[62] right down to the nineteenth century the Lachine Rapids remained a very serious barrier to the freighting of goods up the St. Lawrence.

What changes had Montreal itself undergone during the hundred years that followed its foundation? We have seen that the first settlement was established on a triangle of land between the river St. Pierre and the St. Lawrence. Very soon land was granted and cleared and casual wooden houses were erected across the St. Pierre and along the shore of the main stream, and gradually there emerged something like a short street, the rue St. Paul, parallel with the St. Lawrence and running down stream from the first market place, the present Place Royale; there from 1676 a market was ordered to be held twice a week,[63] though by 1749 Friday appears to have been the only market day.[64] The first twenty years of the town's existence saw, however, very little growth; in 1651 Père Ragueneau reported that only about fifty people remained in Montreal;[65] the Governor-General, M. d'Argenson, writing in November, 1659, spoke of Montreal as a "place that had made so much noise and which really amounted to so very little." Its fort where the boats landed at the mouth of the St. Pierre was already falling into ruins, though a redoubt and a mill were being built on a little hill to the east of the settlement. "There are about forty houses," he went on to say, "almost all in sight of one another, a good arrangement for they can thus in some measure defend one another: there are fifty heads of families and

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[62]Report of Gédèon de Catalogne of Nov. 7, 1712, printed in Munro, *Documents relating to Seigniorial Tenure*, 100; Atherton, *History of Montreal*, I, 333-4; Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, 32-3; J. N. Fauteux, *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada sous le régime français*, II, 333-4; O. Maurault, "Dollier de Casson" (*Revue trimestrielle canadienne*, Feb., 1919, 366-70); the contract with Catalogne is printed in the *Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, 1907, 88-90.

[63]E. Z. Massicotte, "Cadrans . . . horloges etc." (*Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, XXXV, June, 1929, 327-8); the two market days were definitely established by ordinance in 1706 (*Edits, Ordonnances Royaux*, 1855, II, 259).

[64]Peter Kalm, *Travels in North America*, trans. J. R. Forster (1770), III, 74.

[65]Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, XXXVI, 165.

in all about 160 men."[66] And Asseline de Ronual, writing three years later, agreed that Montreal was sparsely populated and that there was nothing to be seen but a chapel in which two Jesuit fathers said Mass every day. "One's life in that district," he added, "is in greater danger than that of a bird on a branch."[67]

The seventies and eighties saw the beginnings of rapidly growing prosperity for Montreal and the whole of New France. The vigorous efforts of Intendant Talon and of Colbert, the Minister in France, had brought out large numbers of new colonists, and in order to aid this emigration by making the country more attractive, they had done all they could to stimulate its economic development. In consequence, Montreal increased in size by leaps and bounds: by 1683 there were 140 families and well over 600 people; and there may have been as many as 900.[68] The Sulpicians were, of course, still lords of Montreal and there is a pleasant story of how their superior, Dollier de Casson, solemnly set out in the spring of 1672 accompanied by the surveyor and notary Basset to plot out the streets of Montreal, setting up stones with leaden stamps as boundary marks; thus was created the rue Notre Dame parallel to the rue St. Paul and a little further from the river bank, five cross streets were planned connecting the two, and a brief stretch of the rue St. Jacques was laid out a little to the north.[69] On this basis, a map giving a splendid picture of Montreal with its streets and close-set houses has been cheerfully assigned to this date; or it is possible that it was drawn solely from the imagination of some would-be historian; whatever its origin, it has been widely printed as representing Montreal in 1672.[70] But, though Dollier undoubtedly planned such streets, they were to receive no concrete realization for many years to come, and there has fortunately been recently discovered a map sent home by Denonville that was drawn not earlier than 1680 and probably as late as 1684; this shows clearly how meagre and scattered the houses of Montreal still were even at that date.[71] The expansion of the town was probably arrested by Iroquois wars at the end of the century, but in 1697 Sœur Morin can write that there were 200 good strong houses in Montreal,[72] and de la Potherie says that between 1701 and 1714 when he left the city, it had increased in size by fifty per cent.[73] There is a

[66]Letter of d'Argenson, Nov. 4, 1659, quoted in Faillon, *Histoire de la colonie française en Canada*, II, 459-60.

[67]Journal of Asseline de Ronual (1662) printed in *Canadian Archives Report*, 1928, App. B, 31.

[68]*Mandements des Evêques de Québec*, I, 127-8; it says "647 âmes"—this may mean that only communicants were counted. When Dollier de Casson speaks of 1,400 or 1,500 people there in 1672, he means in the whole *district* of Montreal (Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, 347). The recensement of 1666 had shown only 584 people in the district of Montreal, so Casson's estimate is likely to be exaggerated (*Rapport de l'Archiviste de Québec*, 1935-6, 154).

[69]Faillon, *Histoire de la colonie française en Canada*, III, 375-7; Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, 31-2; E. Z. Massicotte, "La verbalisation des premières rues de Montreal" (*Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, 1932, 610-21).

[70]Faillon, I believe, was the first to print this map in his *Histoire de la colonie française en Canada*, III, 375.

[71]Catalogued in *Report of Public Archives of Canada*, 1932, 15, Ministère des Colonies D.F.C. no. 466. It shows the Sulpician Seminary and this was certainly not built before 1680; it also mentions the residence of Callières and he did not come to Montreal until 1684.

[72]Morin, *Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu*, 26.

[73]La Potherie, *Histoire de l'Amérique septentrionale*, I, 339.

second map showing Montreal in 1729,[74] and here at last you can see a real city with Dollier de Casson's plan for the streets carried into effect. Rue Notre Dame now runs for as great a distance as does the older rue St. Paul and they are linked together by even more than the five cross streets which Dollier is supposed to have laid out.

Outside the walls, of which I shall speak presently, there appear very few houses to the east—or down stream; the so-called Quebec suburb is a later growth, but already there are a fair number to the west in the direction of Lachine; this was a sign partly of the early westward expansion of which I have spoken above, partly of the traffic that followed the road upstream in order to avoid the rapids, and partly of the greater amenities of the country in that direction.

In 1741 an enquiry by the Company of the Indies had shown that there were over 500 houses in Montreal;[75] in 1754 the population is estimated at 4000, including 60 wealthy merchants, 100 smaller merchants or master tradesmen, and 540 day labourers;[76] while at the beginning of the English occupation the map made by order of General Murray about 1760 records that there were 832 families in the city with 1,069 men capable of bearing arms.[77] This would give a population of about 5000 if due allowance is made for the high average size of the French-Canadian family. Even so Montreal can still be described by a contemporary writer as being "properly only two great long streets."[78] In a map of this period,[79] as compared with that of 1729, the houses appear to be packed closer together and suburbs are quite definitely growing up outside the gates. That on the Lachine road has increased in size and new ones have appeared to the north and east. This was not only the result of the natural increase in population—and it must be remembered that there was very little immigration into New France during the first half of the eighteenth century—but also of the increased feeling of security that followed upon the end of the Iroquois wars, or at any rate upon the pushing of such Indian wars as there were, well away from the walls of Montreal.

To what extent had defence been necessary against this Indian peril? The first savages that came to the infant settlement were undoubtedly friendly, and throughout its history it never had anything to fear from the Hurons or the Algonquins. But in regard to the Iroquois the situation was different. Friends of the Hurons or the Algonquins were enemies of the Iroquois and the French therefore from the beginning had incurred the steady hostility of the latter people. Moreover the Iroquois did not take very happily to missionary enterprise and French missionaries were active amongst them. Finally the Iroquois controlled

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[74]Archives Nationales, Colonies.c.ii, A. Carton 126, no. 49, copy in Public Archives of Canada.

[75]E. Z. Massicotte, "Un recensement inédit" (*Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 1921, sect. I, 6).

[76]"A Capitation List of Canada, 1754" printed in O'Callaghan, *Documents relative to the Colonial History of New York*, X, 271-5.

[77]*Canadian Archives, Publication No. 8* (1912), 599-600.

[78]"Mémoires sur les affaires du Canada depuis 1749 jusqu'à 1760" (*Historical Documents* of Quebec Literary and Historical Society, series I, 203).

[79]"Plan of the Town and Fortifications of Montreal or Ville Marie in Canada" (engraved for the *Universal Magazine*, Nov., 1759). This is really a copy of a map made by T. Jefferys and dated Jan. 30, 1758 (see T. Jefferys, *Natural and Civil History of the French Dominions in North and South America*, I, opposite 12).

the route by which furs might travel down to the rivals of the French, the Dutch, and later the English, and this trade they were anxious to keep open, at the expense of Montreal and Quebec. For all these reasons Iroquois hostility to the French during the seventeenth century had been almost a foregone conclusion and that hostility was made all the more dangerous by the fact that the Iroquois destroyed and drove out the Algonquins and the Hurons, or forced them to join their tribes. But it is a great mistake to over-estimate the danger from the Indians, as the more romantic historians have done. They were not very good shots according to European standards; they were normally cowardly; they rarely faced a determined resistance, and, as soon as they had captured a few prisoners or a little loot, they were anxious to get home. Consequently, while they were undoubtedly a real danger to outlying farms and very small settlements, they rarely undertook anything approaching a siege or made an attack upon a group of well-defended houses, unless successful surprise or overwhelming numbers gave them confidence. The famous expedition of Dollard des Ormeaux did not save Montreal, for the Indians who defeated him had no intention of attacking it.[80]

At first, as we have seen, the colonists lived upon a triangular piece of land between the St. Pierre River and the St. Lawrence and some sort of stockaded fort was erected there to which they could retire in an emergency. By 1660 this had fallen into ruins and though a small redoubt had been built on a little hill down stream, the houses that had spread along the shore relied mainly upon mutual support for their safety. For a prosperous and growing settlement this was felt to be a dangerous state of affairs and therefore in 1687 the Governor of the city, Callières, surrounded Montreal with a stockade of cedar posts five to six feet high,[81] the King paying for the labour and the inhabitants providing the wood. If this had been kept in good condition, there would have been little to fear from the Indians except for those inhabitants who ventured afield or lived on outlying farms. Indeed in the most devastating raid the Indians ever made on the island, the Lachine massacre of 1689, when just over 100 inhabitants perished, there was no attempt made to attack Montreal.[82] But the stockade was not kept in good repair: the royal engineer, Chaussegros de Léry, reported in August, 1717, that Montreal "is surrounded only by a poor enclosure of stakes, part of which are rotten. The inhabitants have made in it several openings and there is no gate in a state to be shut. It is not closed during the whole year . . . what remains of the enclosure of stakes will last at most from four to five years."[83] De Léry was really thinking not so much of defence against the Indians as against the English from the Hudson valley. Already in May, 1716 the Conseil de la Marine had recommended the building of a stone wall, and in 1717 de Léry sent over full plans for royal approval. He says that he started building in the same year and

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[80]E. R. Adair, "Dollard des Ormeaux and the Fight at the Long Sault" (*Canadian Historical Review*, June, 1932, 121-38); G. Lanctot, "Was Dollard the Saviour of New France?" (*ibid.*, 138-46); see also *Canadian Historical Review*, Sept., 1932, 336-41.

[81]Morin, *Annales de l'Hôtel-Dieu*, 25-6; *Nouvelle France: Documents historiques*, 117; Dollier de Casson, *History of Montreal*, 42.

[82]Girouard, *Lake St. Louis*, 135; Margry, *Mémoires et documents*, VI, 112-13.

[83]*Nouvelle France: Documents historiques*, 117; A. Sandham, *Montreal and its Fortifications*, 12-18.

the wall was certainly well under way by the summer of 1721, the cost being met by an annual levy from the citizens of Montreal and from the Seminary; it was completed by 1741 and, though the King made a large grant in 1743 in order to help meet the expense, the inhabitants were still paying for it in 1751.[84] The wall was well planned as can be seen from the maps. The town was roughly a long rectangle and on one of its longest sides—that on the south—the wall followed the St. Lawrence and the river St. Pierre. Within the city the ground rose fairly steadily from the edge of the river up to the rue Notre Dame. There it formed a long level-topped ridge, dropping again steeply to the little river St. Martin, which ran along almost the whole length of the town on its northern side,[85] and it was along the edge of this steep declivity that the land wall was built, thus raising it well above the adjacent country. The line that it followed is still known as Fortification Lane. The two end walls were short and through them were pierced two of the most used gates of the town, the Port St. Martin or Quebec Gate, through which ran the road down stream, and the Recollets Gate leading to the west.

When the wall was built the citizens were very proud of it with its eight gates and its dry ditch seven feet deep, but professional soldiers found it hopelessly inadequate for defence against regular troops, and in 1759-60 the Chevalier de Johnstone describes it as hardly better than a garden wall; Knox refers to it as "a slight wall of masonry, solely calculated to awe the numerous tribes of Indians"; it was evident to him that it was "never designed but as a security against arrows or small arms." The fort on Windmill Hill in the eastern part of Montreal was no better: Franquet in 1752 reported that all it was good for was to fire salutes at times of public rejoicing, and Knox said that its sole defence was "six or eight old worm-eaten guns, some of which are not mounted." This utter weakness in matters of defence made Vaudreuil's decision in 1760 to concentrate the French troops in Montreal an act of folly, and Amherst had only to threaten a bombardment to bring about the city's immediate fall.[86] The wall was finally destroyed in the early years of the nineteenth century,[87] and the redoubt on Windmill Hill gave place to Place Viger Station. But Montreal did not rely for defence upon its walls alone: it had had a small regular garrison since 1665, soldiers had been settled in the Richelieu valley to serve as a barrier against attacks from the south, an outlying fort had been built at Chambly and the Indians of the missions proved invaluable as raiders and spies. Indeed, in 1721 Charlevoix said clearly: "What has been the preservation of Montreal . . . during the last wars, are the two villages of Iroquois

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[84]*Archives de Québec, Ordonnances des Intendants*, III, 153; *Edits, Ordonnances Royaux*, I, 567-8; *Nouvelle France: Documents historiques*, 117, 159-60, 179. The citizens were to pay 4000 *livres* per annum, and the Seminary 2000.

[85]E. Z. Massicotte, "Le Champ de Mars de Montréal au xviii[e] siècle" (*Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, XXXVI, Jan., 1930, 7).

[86]Gosselin, *L'Eglise du Canada*, II, 345-6, quoting letters of 1738; *Historical Documents* of Quebec Literary and Historical Society, series 9, 175-6; "Mémoires sur les affaires du Canada depuis 1749 jusqu'á 1760" (*ibid.*, series 1, 203). See also Knox, *Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America*, II, 604-5; Kalm, *Travels into North America*, III, 72-3; E. Z. Massicotte, "Quelques rues et faubourgs de vieux Montréal" (*Cahiers de Dix*, no. I, 108-9).

[87]Sandham, *Montreal and its Fortifications*, 21-3.

Christians and the fort of Chambly."[88] The two villages were the Sulpician mission on the mountain just outside the walls of Montreal[89] and the Jesuit mission of Caughnawaga on the opposite side of the river.

The Indians may have proved a blessing in so far as they aided Montreal's defence, but in every other direction they were an unmitigated curse. Apparently nothing could stop their drinking or control their violence in Montreal once they had become drunk, and this applies quite as much to the so-called Christian Indians, as to their heathen cousins. The government issued regulations, the Bishop of Quebec fulminated against those who sold the savages strong liquor; the Sulpicians complained bitterly that the peace within their Seminary was disturbed by ribald and drunken howling—all was in vain. On June 12, 1683 the Christian Indians from the two missions are reported to have been drinking in Montreal for ten or twelve days past; they have committed "extraordinary disorders" and the Intendant commands that any Indians caught drunk in the town who make "the slightest indecent or unruly action" shall be at once cast into prison and the French who sold them drink be fined 10 livres on the spot.[90] But the situation did not improve. In 1684 Montreal is described by the Intendant as "more like a hell than an orderly town," and French as well as Indians are forbidden "to get drunk with tumult and uproar."[91] The Abbé Belmont in 1700 calls Montreal "a little Babylon which has overwhelmed and intoxicated all the nations with the wine of its prostitution," and in drunkenness he sees the cause of God's fury against the faithful in sending wars and pestilence, famine and storms.[92] This was certainly in a sermon, where oratorical licence is allowable, but an anonymous writer at the beginning of the eighteenth century shows that this clerical denunciation was hardly too strong: "When they feel their heads beginning to turn, they rejoice and commence to sing their death-chant, into which they put all the imprecations against their enemies; then feeling themselves drunk, they throw away their clothes or just let them drop and often fight one another naked in the very town; they gnaw one another's noses and ears with their teeth; you see few of them who have their faces intact. You see them howling and running with their knives in their hands and they are filled with glee to see women and children flee before them, just as if they were masters of the world."[93] And Charlevoix in 1721 tells much the same story. "In the streets of Montreal are seen," he writes, "the most shocking spectacles . . . husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, children, brothers and sisters seizing of one another by the throats, tearing of one another by the ears, and worrying one another with their teeth like so many enraged wolves. The air resounded during the night with their cries and howlings much more horrible than those with which wild beasts affright the woods."[94] Even in 1757 Montcalm

[88]Charlevoix, *Journal d'un voyage dans l'Amérique septentrionale*, 141.

[89]The mission on the mountain had been founded in 1676; it was decided to move the Indians out to Sault-au-Récollet in 1696 and from there in 1721 they were finally settled near Oka on the Lake of the Two Mountains.

[90]*Archives de Québec, Ordonnances des Gouverneurs et Intendants, 1639-1706*, II, 39.

[91]*Ibid.*, II, 77-8.

[92]Faillon, *Vie de Mlle. Mance*, II, 173-8.

[93]"Histoire de l'eau de vie en Canada" printed in "Collection de mémoires et de relations sur l'histoire ancienne du Canada" (*Historical Documents* of Quebec Literary and Historical Society, series 1, 12-14).

[94]Charlevoix, *Journal of a Voyage to North America*, ed. L. P. Kellogg (1923), I, 204-6.

viewing the Indians in Montreal can write "Paradise for them is to get drunk."[95]

This was one of the scourges of Montreal, the other was the danger of fire, for the houses were very largely built of wood. Of course there were stone houses. A fine stone church had been built between 1672 and 1685; this was pulled down in 1830 and the present neo-gothic monstrosity erected in its place.[96] Madame Bourgeois saw her chapel of Bonsecours being built between 1675 and 1678, and a few years later the Jesuits (1692-1721) and the Récollets (1693-1700) each erected a church and a residence.[97] Between 1685 and 1712 the Sulpicians built themselves what La Hontan calls their "beautiful, great and stately house, built of squared stone";[98] fortunately all but one wing of this still stands, as does also the stone house built in 1705 by de Ramezay, Governor of Montreal; this later was to house first the French Company of the Indies and then the English governors. Vaudreuil built his fine mansion close at hand between 1723 and 1726.[99] A little farther west lay the Hôtel-Dieu and the large house of the Sisters of the Congregation, while on the Pointe-à-Callières where Maisonneuve had first landed were the Hôpital-Général and the Château which Callières built during his governorship of Montreal.[100]

After the disastrous fire of 1721 the Intendant Bégon issued an ordinance forbidding in future any houses to be built of wood, though three weeks later he allowed rebuilding to be carried out in wood by certain specified inhabitants on condition that such houses were pulled down again within three years.[101] Later ordinances tried to insist on stone houses; quarries of good stone and lime for making mortar were to be found close at hand.[102] Yet all was in vain; M. de Monrepos was still forbidding the building of wooden houses in 1755, and Kalm who visited the city in 1749 reported that most of its houses were built of wood, though Murray in 1760 said that stone was replacing wood, except in the suburbs.[103] The tale of fires, not only during the French régime, but under that of the English that followed, is appalling. In 1683 the house of the Sisters of the Congregation was burnt, and, as Bishop St. Vallier writes, "they saved neither their furniture nor their wardrobes, being only too happy to have saved themselves, even then two of their number perished in its flames";[104] in 1694 the whole Indian mission on

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[95]Montcalm, *Journal des campagnes*, 299, Aug. 29, 1757 (*Collection de Lévis* ed. H. R. Casgrain).

[96]*Annuaire de la Ville-Marie*, 346-8; O. Maurault, *Le Vieux Séminaire*, 8.

[97]O. Lapalice, "Les pierres angulaires . . . de Bonsecours" (*Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, 1930, 449-505, 519); *Annuaire de la Ville-Marie*, 131.

[98]La Hontan, *Nouveaux Voyages . . . dans l'Amérique septentrionale* (1703), 27.

[99]*Société historique de Montréal*, XI, 1917, 28-30; V. Morin, "Les Ramezay et leur Château" (*Cahiers de Dix*, no. 3, pp. 12-13, 30, 43-5); E. Z. Massicotte, "Ce que fut la place Jacques Cartier à Montréal (*Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, 1935, 228-32).

[100]E. Z. Massicotte, "Le Château de Callière à Montréal" (*Bulletin des Recherches historiques*, 1939, 309-13).

[101]*Édits, Ordonnances Royaux*, II, 292-4; *Archives de Québec: Ordonnances des Intendants*, I, 205-6.

[102]Report of Gédèon de Catalogne, Nov. 7, 1712, printed in Munro, *Documents relating to Seigniorial Tenure*, 98; Kalm, *Travels into North America*, III, 285-6; Fauteux, *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada sous le régime français*, I, 131-3.

[103]E. Z. Massicotte, *Répertoire des arrêts, édits . . . de Montréal*, 130-1; *Canadian Archives, Publications No. 8*, 599-600; Kalm, *Travels*, III, 73.

[104]St. Vallier, *Estat present de l'Eglise* (1688), 64-5 (reprinted, Quebec, 1856), also printed in H. Têtu and C. O. Gagnon, *Mandements . . . des Evêques de Québec*, I, 207-11.

the mountain was destroyed; in the following year the Hôtel-Dieu was burnt to the ground; it was rebuilt only to be burnt again in 1721 and again in 1734.[105] The fire of June 19, 1721 was started by a soldier enthusiastically firing off his musket in church during the procession of the Blessed Sacrament, and 138 houses, nearly half of Montreal, were burnt down before the fire was stopped by pulling off the blazing roofs with hooks;[106] the loss was estimated at over 1,000,000 livres. That of 1734 was started by a negro slave-woman, and 46 houses were destroyed.[107] The church of Bonsecours was burnt in 1754 and with it most of that quarter of the town.[108] The great fire of 1765 destroyed 108 houses in the wealthiest part of the city; that of 1768 burnt over 100 more, while, as Bishop Briand put it, "the earth was still smoking from the fire" of three years before.[109]

These successive fires devasted Montreal right down to the nineteenth century and swept away a great deal that was of aesthetic and historic interest. Is it surprising, then, that in view of these repeated and sweeping disasters, Montreal under the French, notwithstanding its economic importance, never really emerged very far from the conditions of a frontier town? The old church of Notre Dame was a fine building, the Seminary was sedate and dignified; Charlevoix called it "solid and commodious" rather than "magnificent";[110] and there were several other religious establishments of some size; there were also a few fine substantial houses, but the rest were probably small and possessed no great beauty. In 1706 the streets can still be described as "almost impracticable at all seasons of the year not only for foot passengers but even for carriages and carts, on account of the mud which is to be found in them which comes as much from the softness and unevenness of the ground as from the filth that the inhabitants throw there daily"; and in the same year "all inhabitants of whatsoever quality and condition they may be" are forbidden to keep pigs in their houses.[111] Moreover, again and again right down to 1761 were the citizens forbidden to let their pigs wander at will in the streets.[112]

Still, it would be unfair to exaggerate the primitive character of Montreal at the end of the French régime. It had an established social life, which burst into an activity rivalling that of Quebec when the Governor-General and the Intendant arrived in Montreal, as they

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[105]"Histoire de l'eau de vie en Canada," (*Historical Documents* of Quebec Literary and Historical Society, series 1, 12-14); *Annuaire de la Ville-Marie*, 60-1, 149; *Mandements . . . des Evêques de Québec*, I, 500-1.

[106]Gosselin, *L'Eglise du Canada*, I, 398; Vaudreuil and Bégon to Conseil de la Marine, Jan. 19, 1722, and M. de Ramezay to Conseil de la Marine, Oct. 4, 1721, both printed in *Nouvelle France: Documents historiques*, 187, 190-1.

[107]*Annuaire de la Ville-Marie*, 61; Gosselin, *L'Eglise du Canada*, II, 274; Lapalice, "Les esclaves noirs à Montréal sous l'ancien régime" (*Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal*, July, 1915, series 3, XII, 145-7).

[108]E. Z. Massicotte, *Faits curieux de l'histoire de Montréal*, 31, quoting Leleu, *Histoire de Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours*.

[109]Atherton, *History of Montreal*, II, 397-401; *Mandements . . . des Evêques de Québec*, II, 210-11.

[110]Charlevoix, *Journal d'un voyage . . . dans l'Amérique septentrionale*, 138.

[111]Ordonnance de Raudot, June 22, 1706, printed in Innis, *Select Documents*, 310; *Edits, Ordonnances Royaux*, II, 258-62.

[112]E.g., *Archives de Québec: Ordonnances des Gouverneurs et Intendants, 1639-1706*, II, 308-9, Aug. 9, 1702; *Edits, Ordonnances Royaux*, II, 276, June 29, 1710; E. Z. Massicotte, *Répertoire des arrêts, édits . . . de Montréal*, 130, 136, 137, May 24, 1755, Oct. 9, 1757, April 25, 1758; *Canadian Archives Report*, 1918, App. B, 45, April 29, 1761.

usually did, early in the year to make arrangements for the supplies to be sent to the western posts and the presents to be made to the Indians.[113] For three or four months Montreal became the social capital of New France. When to this was added any considerable body of regular troops, entertainments became almost oppressive, and Montcalm, for instance, complained bitterly of the round of dinners and suppers and balls; the Chevalier de Lévis "had invited 65 ladies young and old; thirty would have been enough, so many men being away at war. The hall was brilliantly illuminated . . . much ceremony and attentive hospitality, refreshments in abundance all the night, and of every kind and species and the party did not leave till 7 o'clock in the morning." Montcalm, however, went to bed at an early hour.[114] In the spring of 1757 Lévis had "given three beautiful great balls for Montcalm before Lent. In addition to the dinners, and the big suppers for ladies three times a week."[115] But the citizens loved good cheer and hospitality; in 1760 Knox found them "gay and sprightly, much more attached to dress and finery than those of Quebec"; in fact the women had a passion for adornment and were said to sacrifice everything in order to satisfy it; the men complained that they were "taking too much care of their dress and squandering all their fortunes and more upon it." Montcalm found Canadian women "witty, courteous and pious, at Quebec gamesters, at Montreal more devoted to conversation and the dance." There was in fact considerable rivalry between the ladies of Quebec and Montreal, and apparently a cause of great grief to the latter was the shortage of men, for all the best ones that came out from France were snapped up by the maidens of Quebec before they had a chance to come up the river and inspect the beauties of Montreal. Though Kalm in 1749 could write of the "more becoming modesty at Montreal," the pressure of this competition apparently drove the young ladies of that city to very direct methods, for he adds, "One of the first questions they propose to a stranger is, whether he is married? The next, how he likes the ladies in the country? . . . And the third, whether he will take one home with him?"[116]

I have tried to paint a picture of the material and social development of Montreal during the French régime, to show how it started in the middle of the seventeenth century as a scattered village devoted first to missionary and then to fur-trading enterprise. How from this, by the end of the French period, it had developed into a modest little town with its bursts of gaiety and social activity during the winter and the early spring; the missionary enterprise had nearly vanished, but the fur-trading had grown to a great organized business, reaching three-quarters of the way across the continent, threatening the English expansion eastwards, and bringing to Montreal a great deal of such prosperity as it possessed. Montreal might be the seat of a royal governor, the centre of a governmental district, the market to which habitants

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[113]Franquet, *Voyages et mémoires sur le Canada*, 129, 141.

[114]Montcalm to Bourlamaque, quoted by Atherton, *History of Montreal*, I, 400-1.

[115]*Canadian Archives Report*, 1929, App. A, 55, Montcalm to his wife, April 16, 1757.

[116]"Mémoires sur les affaires du Canada depuis 1749 jusqu'à 1760," (*Historical Documents* of Quebec Literary and Historical Society, series 1, 203); Knox, *Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America*, II, 605; Kalm, *Travels into North America*, III, 281-4; *Canadian Archives Report*, 1929, App. A, 56, Montcalm to his wife, April 16, 1757.

from the whole countryside brought their surplus goods and where they purchased the few manufactured articles they needed; but these are really small things, for it was from French Montreal that the foundations were laid for that great fur empire that was to be established by the Hudson Bay men and the North-westers, and that stretched from the Arctic to the Pacific, from the Mackenzie to the Mississippi.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Lower said: J'ai écouté avec beaucoup de plaisir aux articles qui sont présentés ce matin. C'est bien convenable que notre première séance commence par l'étude de la grande ville métropole dont on célèbre actuellement le tercentenaire. L'étude du developpement de Montréal a, il me semble, l'importance particulière. Je crois qu'une des clefs la plus signifiante à notre histoire est le concept des villes métropoles avec leurs régions tributaires, qu'on appelle en notre histoire le *pays d'en haut* ou dans un sens plus général le *hinterland.* Le *hinterland* est tout le pays ou l'influence de la ville métropole domine le pays duquel les produits soutiennent et favorisent le progrès du centre métropole. Le centre peut être une ville de commerce comme Montréal at New York; il peut être une grande ville politique comme Londres—le meilleur exemple de métropole dans le monde—il peut être même une grande capitale religieuse. Aussi Rome est une centre métropole en sens religieux comme Londres l'est en sens politique et commercial.

En Canada il est certain que Montréal a été notre centre métropole pendant toute notre histoire, dominant le Canada jusqu'au Pacifique. Mais, aujourd'hui il y a des influences qui disputent avec Montréal sa place. Néanmoins, pour l'historien, Montréal est la ville la plus signifiante en Canada, même la plus intéressante. C'est pour ces raisons et pour les bons essais que nous venons d'écouter que je remercie et félicite les messieurs qui les ont lus.