

BREATH O' THE HEATHER

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# Canada's Commercial Metropolis

By Sergt. G. W. Ross

**W**HEN Jacques Cartier voyaged up the St. Lawrence River in 1535 in quest of the walled city of Hochelaga he found the Indian village nestled under a majestic height of land which he called Mount Royal and in a slightly corrupted form that is the name of the City of Montreal to-day.

The real history of Montreal begins with the landing of Paul de Chomedy, Sieur de Maisonneuve and a party of about three score on the 18th of May, 1642. Mass was celebrated and Father Vimont must have had a prophetic vision as he addressed the little party with these words: "You are a grain of mustard seed that shall rise and grow till its branches overshadow the earth. You are few, but your work is the work of God. His smile is upon you and your children shall fill the land."

It was the fur trade that gave Montreal its start. In spite of the almost ruinous competition among the companies, the trade that they brought to the base of Mount Royal increased the size and importance of the town. Then came a growing lumber industry and wheat exportation, an important factor in the commercial life. Business in these commodities was hindered for a time by ill-advised interference of the King. Bigot and "Frippe" plundered the merchants. But the town rose superior to adversity and after the "Seven Years'

War" a rapidly growing shipbuilding industry soon fixed Montreal as an important maritime port.



Statue of Maisonneuve, founder of Montreal, 1642

John Molson, founder of the brewing business, now carried on under that name, built the second steam vessel in America and the "Accommodation" as she was called, made the run between Montreal and Quebec in 36 hours.

Montreal has risen to the proud position of the first city of the Do-

minion, and one of the first cities of the continent. Broad streets, towering skyscrapers, palatial residences, wonderful churches, and quaint relics of the past vie with each other to interest the visitor to the city founded by Maisonneuve.

The heart of the city, is the Place d'Armes. There stands the wonderful statue of Maisonneuve by Louis Hébert. This bronze monument depicts him in cuirass and the French costume of the seventeenth century bearing aloft the fleur-de-lys banner. The granite pedestal which supports the bronze bears the inscription "Paul de Chomedy de Maisonneuve, Fondateur de Montreal, 1642." There are several bas-reliefs representing Maisonneuve killing the Indian chief, the founding of Ville-Marie, and the deaths of Lambert, Closse and Dollard. Facing the Maisonneuve Statue is the Church, Notre Dame de Montreal, a Gothic pile that is the religious center of a whole race. This majestic temple accommodates fifteen thousand people and vast sums have been expended upon it. The interior is even more interesting than the exterior and the two massive tiers of galleries are very impressive. This church contains many relics of great antiquity. In the west tower is the largest bell in America "Le Gros Bourdon" which is only sounded on the most solemn occasions. It weighs 24,780 pounds.