

**THE MAKERS OF  
CANADA.  
BISHOP LAVAL**

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The Makers of Canada. Bishop Laval by A. Leblond de Brumath

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**A. LEBLOND DE BRUMATH**

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THE MAKERS OF CANADA

# BISHOP LAVAL

BY

A. LEBLOND DE BRUMATH

TORONTO

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## CHAPTER I

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN CANADA

**I**F, standing upon the threshold of the twentieth century, we cast a look behind us to note the road traversed, the victories gained by the great army of Christ, we discover everywhere marvels of abnegation and sacrifice ; everywhere we see rising before us the dazzling figures of apostles, of doctors of the Church and of martyrs who arouse our admiration and command our respect. There is no epoch, no generation, even, which has not given to the Church its phalanx of heroes, its quota of deeds of devotion, whether they have become illustrious or have remained unknown.

Born barely three centuries ago, the Christianity of New France has enriched history with pages no less glorious than those in which are enshrined the lofty deeds of her elders. To the list, already long, of workers for the gospel she has added the names of the Récollets and of the Jesuits, of the Sulpicians and of the Oblate Fathers, who crossed the seas to plant the faith among the hordes of barbarians who inhabited the immense regions to-day known as the Dominion of Canada.

And what daring was necessary, in the early

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days of the colony, to plunge into the vast forests of North America! Incessant toil, sacrifice, pain and death in its most terrible forms were the price that was gladly paid in the service of God by men who turned their backs upon the comforts of civilized France to carry the faith into the unknown wilderness.

Think of what Canada was at the beginning of the seventeenth century! Instead of these fertile provinces, covered to-day by luxuriant harvests, man's gaze met everywhere only impenetrable forests in which the woodsman's axe had not yet permitted the plough to cleave and fertilize the soil; instead of our rich and populous cities, of our innumerable villages daintily perched on the brinks of streams, or rising here and there in the midst of verdant plains, the eye perceived only puny wigwams isolated and lost upon the banks of the great river, or perhaps a few agglomerations of smoky huts, such as Hochelaga or Stadaconé; instead of our iron rails, penetrating in all directions, instead of our peaceful fields over which trains hasten at marvellous speed from ocean to ocean, there were but narrow trails winding through a jungle of primeval trees, behind which hid in turn the Iroquois, the Huron or the Algonquin, awaiting the propitious moment to let fly the fatal arrow; instead of the numerous vessels bearing over the waves of the St. Lawrence, at a distance of more than six hundred leagues from the sea,