THE INFLUENCE OF THE IROQUOIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FRANCE 1603-1663

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Introduction

It was ever the policy of France in America to take an active part in the politics of the forest and from the outset the fortunes of the French colony on the banks of the St. Lawrence were closely bound up with those of the neighboring Indian tribes. The long strife with the Iroquois lies in the background of the whole history of France's effort in Canada. The history of the first sixty years is little more than the tale of the struggle of trader, priest and colonist and their savage allies against the Five Nations of the Iroquois.

In the following pages an attempt will be made to determine the influence of these Iroquois wars upon the development of New France during this early period (1605-1663). For this purpose the field has been divided chronologically into three periods. The first, 1603-1629, which we have entitled "The Beginnings of New France", takes the story up to the capture of New France by the English. Its closing date, 1629, coincides roughly with the expulsion of the Mahicans from the Hudson region, a development which enabled the Mohawk to turn their attention northward to the St. Lawrence valley which for twenty years they had left in comparative peace. During this period, then, the influence of the Iroquois on the development of New France appears to be negligible.

The second period (1632-1645) is the story of New France under the direct rule of the Company of New France. It is a period marked throughout by Mohawk activity on the St. Lawrence which by the close of 1645 had begun to make its influence felt on the trade of New France. The significant fact of these years is the arming of the Mohawk

with guns obtained in trade from the Dutch on the Hudson, weapons which were to prove one of the decisive factors in the developments of 1648-50. These years are marked by a gradual decline of the Indian allies of the French in numbers and strength as a result of disease and war. The French settlement grows very slowly but is too weak to be more than a spectator in the ruinous conflict between the Hurons and Algonkin and their Iroquois foes.

The period 1646-1665 reveals the Iroquois at the height of their power. They scatter the savage allies of the French and harass the French settlements. The trade of New France is disrupted and disorganised, the best hopes of the missions swept away. Yet in spite of almost incessant war the colony grows in population if not in strength. The year 1665 marks the end of the era of the trading company in New France and for this change of policy on the part of the French government the Iroquois wars seem to have been in the main responsible.

In Chapters II to IV these developments are traced in some detail. In Chapter V are summed up the conclusions reached. Chapter I has been devoted to a brief description of the outstanding geographic features and of the opposing Indian factions, without which a complete understanding of the events of these years cannot be acquired.

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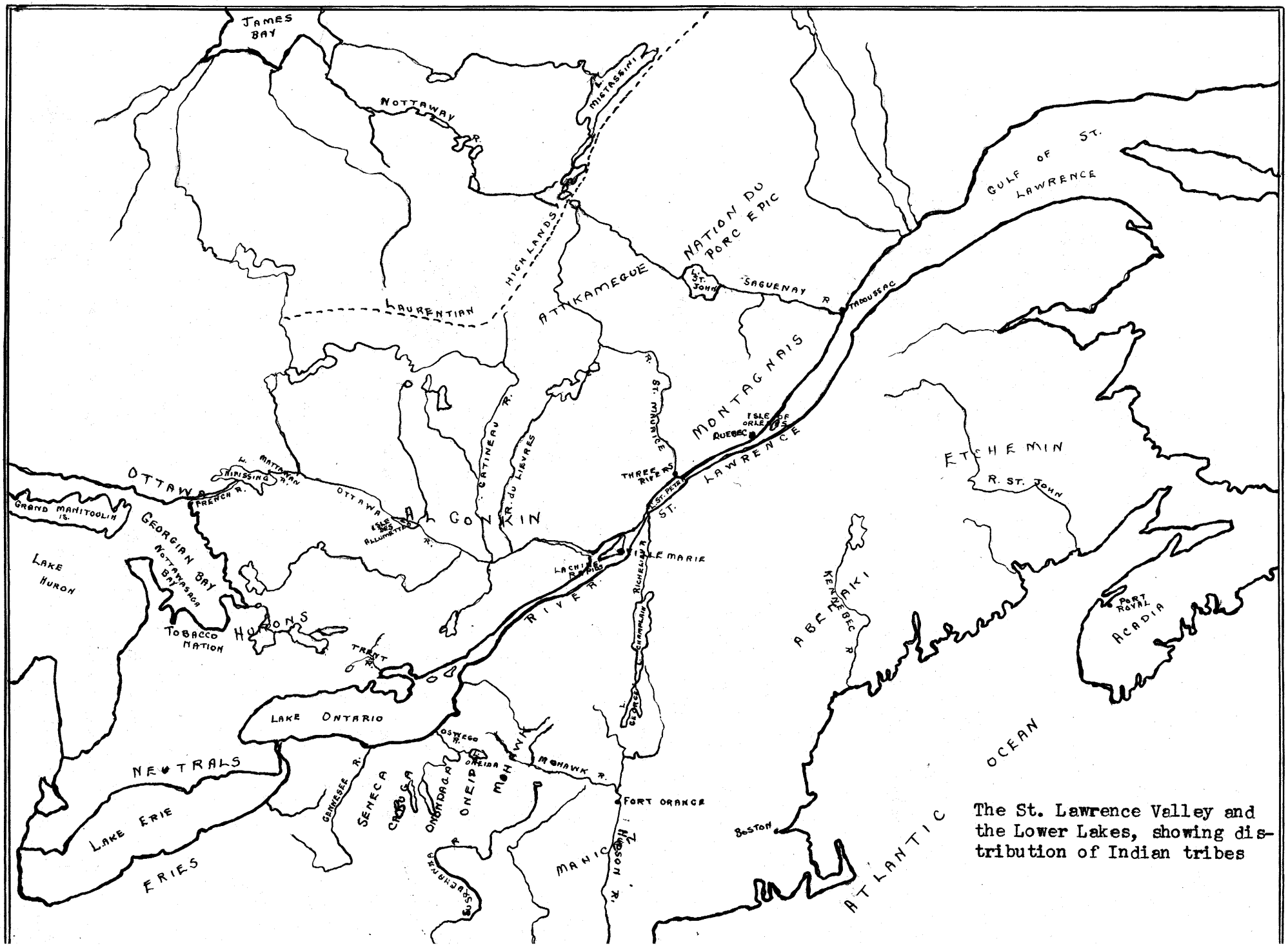

The St. Lawrence Valley and the Lower Lakes, showing distribution of Indian tribes

CHAPTER I

The Land and The Men

The key to much of the early history of New France is to be found in the nature of the land and the men whom Champlain found in possession when he first touched its shores in 1603. It seems advisable, therefore, before commencing the story of early French enterprise in the St. Lawrence Valley, to examine briefly the background of forest and stream and of warring tribes which helped to determine its course.

Foremost among the geographic factors which exerted a profound influence upon the early development of New France were the majestic water highway of the St. Lawrence and the vast area to the north and west known as the Precambrian Shield.

With reason has the St. Lawrence been described as the roadway into the heart of the North American continent. In early days, when the canoe was the chief mode of transportation, it was along the rivers that Indian and European went on the warpath and on the fur trail, along the rivers that priest and trader, explorer and soldier sped on their respective missions. In the exploration of the Lakes region, in the development of the fur trade, and in the relations between the French and the aboriginal tribes of the east, the St. Lawrence River and its network of tributaries were of paramount importance.

East of the Island of Montreal two important rivers, the Saguenay and the St. Maurice, discharged into the St. Lawrence from the north. Both streams tapped the rich fur-bearing region north of the Great River; the headwaters of both were within easy reach of the sources of Rottawa

River and of Lake Mistassini, thus affording communication with the region east of James Bay. Lake St. John, drained by the Saguenay, was a favorite trading rendez-vous for the northern tribes. At the opening of the 17th century, Tadoussac at the mouth of this river was the centre of the fur trade in the St. Lawrence valley, and though later superseded in this respect by posts further inland, continued to be for many years an important trading station for the roving tribes of northeastern Quebec. In 1634 the mouth of the St. Maurice became the site of one of the principal commercial and missionary settlements of New France - Three Rivers.

At the western tip of the Island of Montreal, near the treacherous Lachine Rapids, the main tributary of the St. Lawrence, the Ottawa River, mingled its waters with those of the Great River. With Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence closed by Iroquois hostility, the Ottawa offered to the Hurons an alternative, though longer and more difficult, route to the French settlements via Georgian Bay, French River, Lake Nipissing, the Mattawan tributary and the main stream of the Ottawa. When, about the middle of the 17th century, lurking Iroquois war parties rendered even this highway unsafe, the Algonkin of the Ottawa region resorted to an indirect route by way of the Gatineau, from which they portaged to a feeder of the St. Maurice and thence down that stream to Three Rivers.

Mid-way between Montreal and Three Rivers a short but very important stream flowed up from the south to discharge into the St. Lawrence. It is now known as the Richelieu, but its earlier name, the River of the Iroquois, is infinitely more significant, since it was the natural highway leading from the St. Lawrence Valley to the Iroquois country and a stream down which frequently swept the war canoes of the Mohawk on their way to harry the French settlements. The Richelieu River and streams

with which it was closely connected afforded access on the one hand to the Atlantic, on the other to Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence. Proceeding up the Richelieu and thence through Lake Champlain and Lake George, the traveller might reach the Hudson River by a short portage. Thence he might follow that river to its mouth, or he might ascend its tributary, the Mohawk, reach Lake Oneida by a short portage, then go down Oswego River to Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence. The current of the Richelieu was in favour of the Iroquois in their descents on the St. Lawrence settlements. To strike at Three Rivers they had to follow the river to its mouth, passing the French fort at Chambly, but they could appear before Montreal by ascending Little Montreal River, portaging to Prairie River, and following it to its mouth opposite the little French settlement on the southeast corner of the island. The Richelieu River system thus placed the Iroquois in a strong offensive position, of which they were not slow to take advantage. Operating from the mouth of the river as a base, the Mohawk could command the western approaches to the St. Lawrence and block French communications with the west. Until their power was checked the benefits which might accrue to the French through command of the lower St. Lawrence were seriously discounted.

The St. Lawrence and its associated streams drained a large portion of the area known to geologists as the Precambrian Shield. Extending over the greater part of the present provinces of Ontario and Quebec, it was a region of shallow soil, unfavourable to agriculture, but supporting vast forests of pine and spruce, tamarack and fir, the

hardwoods, beech, ash, walnut, maple, elm, poplar and willow. These forests were par excellence the habitat of the beaver, an animal now almost extinct, but which three centuries ago played a leading role in the drama of the fur trade.

The early history of New France, no less than that of the North-west, is largely the story of the development of the fur trade. The connection between a new fashion in hats and the foundation of a French colony in North America might, at a casual glance, seem remote, if not ridiculous. Yet the idea is not so fantastic as it seems. The beaver hat, introduced sometime during the second half of the 16th century, became after the turn of the century increasingly popular and was, in various shapes and sizes, the vogue for almost three centuries. The demand for beaver fur increased enormously. The trade in furs, hitherto of minor importance and purely incidental to the fishing, had become by the close of the 16th century an object in itself, important and profitable enough to come within the purview of that type of government regulation which flourished so vigorously at the time, namely, monopoly. And since a prize so valuable must be preserved for France and the only way in which to achieve that end was to convert titular claim into actual possession through colonization, it was decided to plant a French colony in North America. Thus New France owed its inception to the fur trade.

Since the base upon which this whole structure of trade, industry and fashion rested was the pelt of the beaver, let us consider for a moment the life and habits of this interesting and industrious animal.(1 The food of the beaver consists chiefly of the roots of various water plants, the

(1 The following account is based largely upon H. T. Martin., Castorologia (London, 1892) and H. A. Innis., The Fur Trade in Canada (London, 1930), Chapter I.

bark and wood of the birch, cottonwood, poplar and willow, and the young bark and twigs of the hardwoods. Hence its habitat is largely determined by the deciduous forest area, whose northerly boundary line extends northeast from the mouth of the Churchill to the mouth of the Mackenzie River. Territory south of this line, well wooded with poplar and willow, and abounding in small lakes and sluggish, continuous streams, is especially favorable. The more northerly latitudes produce the highest grade of fur, dark chestnut tipped with black. As we go southward, the color becomes lighter, through brown to almost yellow or straw colored. The pelt is at its best and most valuable in the winter and early spring, though, since the beaver is an amphibious animal, the fur is comparatively thick and abundant even in summer, but much coarser. The beaver skin consists of the coarse guard hair, up to two inches in length, and the soft under hair or fur fibre, at most one inch long, covered with tiny projecting epidermal scales which make it highly suitable for felting. Before fashioning the skins into robes, the Indians scraped and rubbed them on the fleshy side, thus loosening the deep roots of the guard hair, which dropped out with wear. The soft under fur, worn next to the body, became greasy and pliable, the "castor gras" so eagerly sought by the hatters. In France the greasy robes of the none too cleanly "lord of the forest", by a process of shearing, cleaning and moulding, too intricate to be described here, emerged finally as an elegant creation of the hatter's art, perchance to crown the perfumed and powdered locks of the court dandy.

Long before the advent of Europeans, the beaver was in great demand among the Indians themselves for food and robes, and they had already developed elaborate and effective hunting methods. Its life

cycle and habits made the beaver an easy prey. It was late in maturing, being not full grown until two and one half years of age, mating at two years and staying for a year with its parents. It was, in addition, a gregarious animal, forming "colonies." Some beaver colonies demonstrated a preference for certain sites, to which they would return time after time, in spite of repeated Indian inroads on the population. Since it could travel over land only very slowly, the beaver did not migrate far. In summer the animals sought the shady streams and pools, returning often to the same lodge in the fall. In the summer the beaver was difficult to catch with the primitive bow and arrow, but in winter he was at the mercy of the Indian hunter. The beaver lodge of sticks cemented with mud, often twenty feet across the base and three to five feet high, housing sometimes several families, may have been a remarkable achievement of primitive masonry, but it was its builder's undoing. The Indian had adapted his hunting technique to the peculiar mode of life of the beaver. Winter was the season par excellence for the beaver hunt, in which frequently the whole village participated. The hunters would cut holes in the ice around the beaver lodge. Then the women and boys would break in the house with axes and clubs. The beaver, fleeing to his burrow in the bank, would become entangled in the nets which the hunters dropped through the holes in the ice, dragged out and despatched with club or spear. When the crude stone weapons were replaced with the iron of the trader, the destructive power of the Indian was, of course, greatly increased.

As the 17th century progressed, the demand for beaver hats increased, the technique of manufacturing was improved, and governments took a hand in the business by issuing regulations against adulteration of the fabric.(1 The natural result was that the demand for beaver skins soared, traders encouraged

(1 In 1654 the court of France issued a decree against adulteration with rabbit's fur, and four years later the British government issued a proclamation strictly forbidding the use of any material in making "beaver" hats excepting beaver "stuff" or "wool". (Martin, op. cit., p. 125).

the Indians to hunt beaver and resorted to all manner of expedients to increase the output of fur, forming alliances with savage tribes and encouraging them in their wars.

While the European demand for fur steadily rose, the Indian demand for European manufactured goods was persistent and cumulative, owing to the ever widening area of distribution involved and the rapid depreciation of the goods in the careless hands of the natives. They became increasingly dependent on European articles because, having proved the superiority of iron over stone, they allowed the primitive methods of manufacturing weapons and utensils to fall into disuse. Since the only currency with which these goods might be purchased was fur, they had a strong incentive to hunt quite apart from the exhortations of the trader. This twofold pressure from Indian and European had disastrous results not only for the beaver, but ultimately also for both parties to the transaction.

For the beaver the increased demand for fur meant, in some districts, extinction. On the one hand, the iron weapons which the Indian obtained in trade were immensely superior to stone for hunting purposes; he could capture beaver more easily, more quickly, and in larger numbers. On the other, in the mad scramble for the wealth which the beaver represented, the Indian, once the careful husbander of the beaver, became its most inveterate hunter.(1 Before the advent of the European and the tremendous demand for fur, he was very provident, never allowing his beaver reserve to be too closely hunted and always leaving several young for breeding purposes. Now when fur, not food, was the prime object of the hunt, whole colonies were exterminated and great areas came to be outtrapped. This situation did not become acute during this early period

(1 Martin, op. cit., p. 144.

save among populous sedentary nations such as the Hurons and Iroquois whose hunting grounds were rather narrowly circumscribed.

For the Indian the increased stress on the capture of beaver meant a sharpening of old hostilities. The length of time required to produce the "castor gras" limited the supply available immediately at hand. Improvident hunting methods, which were the product of fierce competition, soon resulted in exhaustion of the supply of beaver among the sedentary tribes and among the tribes in closest contact with the French. From this combination of circumstances came greater dependence on intertribal trade and constant movement to the interior to secure fresh supplies of fur. To the old enmity between Huron and Iroquois was now added rivalry for the profitable position of middleman between the hunting tribes of the north and the European trader. A remarkable period of intrigue and diplomacy among Indian tribes ensued, while Indian middlemen jealously resisted any attempt on the part of Dutch or French to come into direct contact with tribes possessing abundant supplies of fur. The net result was continuous and destructive warfare between tribes, accompanied by the spread of devastating European diseases.

For the feeble settlements on the St. Lawrence the emphasis on the fur trade likewise spelled grief. The interests of fur trader and agricultural settler are diametrically opposed. Consequently the various monopolists consistently evaded their colonizing obligations, and the colony was left weak and almost defenceless, while Indian warfare, through the French alliance with Hurons and Algonkin, left its trail of blood and horror through the settlements.

Nor did the merchants escape unscathed. In the early days they were inclined to look with favour on the hostility of Huron and Iroquois,

fearing that peace might divert the furs down the Hudson to Fort Orange.[1] However, in the decade 1645-55 the Iroquois menace reached such proportions that the trade practically ceased.

But we are anticipating here. Before tracing in detail the story of the trader, colonist and missionary, let us pause for a moment to consider the Indian tribes with which their fortunes were so intimately linked.

The aboriginal tribes with which we are here concerned may be divided on linguistic grounds, and partially by habits of life, into two great families, the Algonkians and the Iroquoians. When Champlain sailed up the St. Lawrence in 1603, tribes speaking various Algonkian dialects occupied part of Virginia and Pennsylvania, New Jersey, southeastern New York, New England and Acadia, clustered around the Ottawa River and along the shores of the Upper Lakes, and roamed the vast forests extending from the St. Lawrence northward to Hudson's Bay. Around the Lower Lakes, and surrounded on all sides by Algonkian nations, lay the tribes speaking the generic tongue of the Iroquois. Through central New York, from Schoharie Creek to the Genesee, stretched the Five Nations of the Iroquois.[2] To the south, along the Susquehanna, lay the Andastes of the French, or the Susquehannas of the English. Westward, along the southern shore of the lake to which they have given their name, dwelt the Eries, while along its northern shore and on both sides of the Niagara River was the Neutral Nation. North of these, in what is now the northern and eastern portion of Simcoe County, Ontario, lived the Hurons or Wyandots, the "good Iroquois" of Champlain. Two days' journey west of their frontier towns, in the wooded valleys of the Blue Mountains, lay the nine villages of the Petuns

(1 G. T. Sagard, Histoire du Canada et Voyages que les Frères Mineurs Récollects y ont faict pour la Conversion des Infidelles. (Paris, 1866) Book IV, 811.

(2 From east to west they were, in order, the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca.

or Tobacco Nation.[1] A brief glance at the outstanding cultural traits of these two families will explain in some measure the course of events which we are about to describe.

Broadly speaking, the Algonkians, as contrasted with the sedentary Iroquoians, were a migratory people, living mainly by hunting and fishing. Distinctive features of Algonkian culture were their light and swift birch-bark canoes, their winter snowshoes, their portable lodges of bark, and their stores of furs, all of which bespoke power of rapid movement and skill in hunting. The nature of the hunting grounds of the Canadian Algonkin, with their intricate network of connecting waterways separated by very low water partings, demanded such a mode of water transport as the light, easily portable birch-bark canoe afforded, and the Algonkin had acquired a high degree of skill in managing this frail and treacherous craft.

The Algonkin were rude in life and manners, their civilisation was exceedingly primitive, though there were, of course, considerable differences in cultural level between tribes. At the upper end of the scale were the Algonkian tribes of New England which supplemented their hunting and fishing with a rude type of agriculture. At the lower end were the Montagnais, the nearest neighbours of the French, who roamed in scattered bands through the forests of what is now the province of Quebec. These relied almost entirely on the spoils of the chase and the bounty of the streams for their daily sustenance. Consequently famine was no stranger to their lodges, particularly in winter in the absence of heavy snows on which depended the success of the moose hunt. In extremity cannibalism was not unknown among them. Their mental condition corresponded to the physical. Treacherous, mendacious, unstable, plunging with one reverse of fortune from the heights of

[1] This distribution is taken from F. Parkman, The Jesuits in North America (Boston, 1916), Introduction, p. xx.

boastful arrogance to the depths of abject despair, of these, his allies, Champlain declared, "We have no worse enemies than these savages."(1 Occupying an intermediate position on the cultural scale were the tribes of the Ottawa region, the "Nation of the Isle", inhabiting Allumette Island, and the Nipissings of the lake which bears their name. These people, living closer to Huronia, the "granary of most of the Algonkins",(2 could easily supplement through trade with the friendly Hurons the harvest of forest and stream. Again, their more secure economic position produced a corresponding mental attitude. The Algonkin of the Isle, particularly, were haughty, insolent, intractable. The Jesuit Le Jeune confessed that he dared not use to them such language as he did to the Montagnais.(3

Turning now to the Iroquoians, we are aware at once that here is a superior type of civilization. Instead of wandering tribes, we have sedentary nations, living in villages whose sites are moved only when the ground is worked out or the supply of firewood exhausted, every ten, fifteen, twenty or thirty years.(4 The characteristic "long house" accommodating several families replaces the rude conical lodge of the Algonkin. The products of the soil, - maize, beans, squash, - replace the products of forest and stream as the staple of life. There is, too, an attempt at political organization, reaching its highest development in the League of the Iroquois. On the Hurons and Iroquois, since they play so significant a part in our story, we shall concentrate our attention. Of the other

(1 H. P. Biggar (Ed.) Works of Samuel de Champlain (Toronto, 1922-), Vol. V, p. 124.

(2 R. G. Thwaites (Ed.) Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1790. (Cleveland, 1896-), Vol. VIII, p. 115. Hereafter this series will be referred to as the "Jesuit Relations".

(3 Ibid., IX, 257.

(4 Works of Champlain, III, 124.

related Iroquoian tribes, which appear only incidentally, brief mention will suffice.

In Huron and Iroquois culture and habits of life there are many points of similarity which go far towards explaining the bitter and deep seated rivalry between these two nations. Probably the most significant of these is the basic position of agriculture in their savage economy. Red beans and squash were grown rather extensively, but the principal crop was maize or Indian corn which, prepared in a variety of ways, was the staple food.(1 Fish and game figured in their diet, not as the main item of fare, but rather as a seasoning for the insipid corn broth or sagamité or as a delicacy reserved for feasts. Thus, in contrast to the roving Algonkians, the Hurons and Iroquois were not dependent for their food supply on the chase, with all its vicissitudes of fortune, nor were they subject to famine, except on the infrequent occasions when the maize crop failed. Crude as their methods and implements of cultivation were, an ordinary harvest would yield more than enough for their needs, and in caches or deep pits in the earth might be laid up stores of provisions against a season of want. The Huron-Iroquois system of economy thus produced a more secure, more stable and more closely knit form of social and political organization than was possible under the unsettled conditions of life among the Algonkians.

The possession of these stores of corn was of manifest advantage in war. Campaign fare was the light, easily portable and nutritious meal made from roasted corn and eaten dry or mixed with a little hot or cold water. On the march it might be supplemented by game and fish, but when in enemy country or when retiring after an attack, it was their sole means

(1 Works of Champlain, III, 125, 151.

of subsistence.[1] The chances of making a surprise attack were infinitely greater if the raiding party did not have to scatter for hunting, while if the attack failed, a much speedier retreat was possible if the fugitives did not have to pause to hunt. On the other hand, dependence on the corn supply might have had disastrous results if the enemy had destroyed the standing crops or discovered and looted the hidden stores. But this was not the savage idea of warfare, and until the French undertook large scale operations against the Iroquois in 1666, this contingency never arose.

The agricultural activities of the Hurons and Iroquois were of no less advantage in trading. The regions inhabited by these two nations were relatively small and poor in the fur of the beaver, the currency of the country, with which might be purchased the highly prized kettles, iron tools and weapons of the European trader. But surplus stores of corn might be traded with the hunting Indians who had furs in abundance[2], and in such a transaction the middleman's profit was an item not to be overlooked. In fact, we shall find that in the later stages of the struggle between the Hurons and Iroquois, especially in the critical decade 1640-50, the old hostility is reinforced by economic rivalry, the desire to control the trade in the rich fur-bearing regions north of the St. Lawrence, and furs as well as scalps become the objective of Iroquois raiding expeditions to the north. Corn was valuable not only as an article of barter, but also as a food to sustain the savage traders in the task of bringing down the furs to acquired to the trading posts of the Europeans, and for precisely the same reasons which made it so invaluable on the war path ; it was light, easily carried, and high in food value, and obviated the necessity of fre-

[1] Works of Champlain, II, 87.
[2] Ibid., III, 55.

quent stops for hunting which were so wasteful of time.(1

Though the agricultural pursuits of the Hurons and Iroquois gave them decided economic advantages over the migratory tribes, they had certain features which were not so desirable. Most significant of these was the fact that the task of cultivating and harvesting the crop was relegated entirely to the women. This left the men free to scatter for hunting, trading and raiding, with the result that in the summer the country was largely denuded of its able bodied men. For this reason, as well as for the much better opportunities for ambush afforded by the leafy cover on the trees and bushes, June to September was the favorite season for raiding on the part of both nations. Thus the Huron-Iroquois agricultural system, perhaps indirectly, but nevertheless certainly, provided through the idleness of the men an added incentive for raiding and this in turn increased the hazard to those who were left at home in a weakened state of defence.

This at once raises the question of Indian warfare, offensive and defensive. Iroquoians and Algonkians were alike in their concept of the objectives of war. War was waged not, as it was by civilized men, with the idea of seizing a country for exploitation or for the advancement of some political objective or religious creed, but in order to avenge some wrong, often petty, or to exterminate the enemy population. This latter statement may need to be qualified somewhat in the light of the wholesale adoption of captives by the Iroquois in the closing stages of the war, but it must be remembered that these were absorbed completely into the structure of Iroquois society and lost their tribal identity.

Indian methods of warfare were scarcely more comparable to those employed by civilized nations. There were, indeed, occasional planned cam-

(1 On the long gruelling trip down to Quebec the Hurons were in the habit of caching corn at various points en route for use on the return journey. (Jesuit Relations, VIII, 77.)

paigns in which several tribes participated[1], frequent hand-to-hand fights involving a few hundred combatants, sometimes, and particularly in the later stages of the Iroquois war, sieges of enemy towns; some tribes even had a spy system.[2] On these points there is some slight resemblance to European practices, though Indian warfare was, of course, on a much smaller scale. More common, however, and very noticeable after 1620, was the "war of ambushes"[3] the whole strategy of which pivoted on the element of surprise. Small bands of five or six, twenty, thirty, forty, rarely more than one hundred, warriors would lie in ambush in places frequented by enemy hunting and fishing parties, at portages along the trade routes, or lurk outside their villages and encampments in the hope of striking a sudden blow and then retreating with scalps and prisoners as trophies. In the late 'forties and 'fifties we shall find the Iroquois resorting to warfare on a larger scale which involved armies of one thousand and more, and attacking, pillaging and burning large fortified towns. But then, as before, the element of surprise was the guiding principle of their strategy, which was highly successful, since, in contrast to European armies, Indian forces were highly mobile.

If the objectives and conduct of offensive warfare were in the main similar among all tribes, the Iroquoians were vastly superior to the Algonkians in the art of defence. In view of their nomadic mode

(1 as in Champlain's campaigns of 1609 and 1610. Cf. also his report of the victory of 1605. "Three nations had taken part in the war, the Etchemins, Algonkins and Montagnais, to the number of a thousand, and these went on the warpath against the Iroquois." (Works of Champlain, I, 105).

(2 Jesuit Relations, XXII, 309.

(3 Ibid., IX, 251. "The greater part of their wars consists in ambushes." G. T. Sagard, Le Grand Voyage du Pays des Hurons Situé en l'Amérique, (Paris, 1865). "Their wars are really only surprises and deceptions." (I, 149)

of life, it was scarcely to be expected that the latter would have evolved any elaborate system of fortification. Occasionally villages of the more settled bands were surrounded by a palisade, but this was usually but a single row, planted upright, and afforded little protection against a determined foe, especially since no precautions were taken to guard against surprise. The palisaded towns of the Iroquoians, on the other hand, had strong and extensive defensive works, almost impregnable to the usual savage assault, provided the defenders had been in some degree forewarned. In essential points the fortifications of this family of tribes were very similar. A site was chosen favourable for defence, such as the crown of a hill or a high point of land or the bank of a lake. The village was surrounded by two, three or even four concentric rows of palisades, intersecting at the top to form a gallery of timber which the defenders manned, from this vantage ground directing stones and arrows on the assailants. Wooden gutters enabled them to pour streams of water on the fires which the enemy might kindle at the foot of the palisade. The whole structure was lined within to the height of a man with heavy sheets of bark. The Jesuits, very early in their sojourn among the Hurons, taught them to build rectangular palisaded works with bastions and the Iroquois soon adopted the same practice. The more exposed towns were naturally the most strongly fortified, and in times of invasion the inhabitants of the weaker villages fled to them for protection or scattered in the woods.

On the warpath the Indian was in some respects surprisingly negligent. Once in enemy country, war parties proceeded with great stealth, travelling by night and resting during the day in the leafy recesses of the forest. No fires were made lest the smoke betray their presence to a watchful foe, and care was taken not to leave a too obvious trail.

Large parties frequently threw up around their encampments a rough barricade of tree trunks and branches, and if the site was a rendez-vous for several bands of warriors or a base for raiding expeditions, the fort was often quite sturdily built. On the other hand, relying on the information of their scouts who went on in front of the main body and returned to it to report, the Indian war parties set no sentries to guard against a surprise attack at night, with the result that very frequently they were set upon and massacred while asleep. To a soldier like Champlain this neglect of the most elementary precaution seemed incredibly foolhardy, but he remonstrated with them in vain.(1

At the opening of our period the tribes of the Huron-Iroquois family, unlike the Algonkin of the St. Lawrence region, had had no direct contact with the European trader and their weapons were necessarily primitive. A club, a stone axe, a bow and stone or flint-tipped arrows(2, a knife of stone or bone, defensive armor consisting of primitive breastplates and greaves of twigs interwoven with cordage, and large shields of rawhide or wood overlaid with plaited and twisted thongs of skin completed their simple armament.(3 But after the advent of the European trader, the Hurons quickly laid aside their stone axes, knives, spear and arrow heads for the iron articles which could be obtained in trade with the French. For the Iroquois the Dutch performed a similar service. They

(1 Works of Champlain, II, 84-5. Cf, however, Pere de Charlevoix, who asserts that the Iroquois were the only warriors who took some precaution against surprise attacks on the march, a fact to which he attributes some of their success. (Histoire et Description Generale de la Nouvelle France avec Le Journal Historique d'un Voyage fait par ordre du Roi dans l'Amerique Septentrionale (Paris, 1744), Tome I, p. 144.

(2 The flint deposits indispensable to both Hurons and Iroquois were controlled by the Neutrals, a fact which probably accounts for the care taken by both warring factions to keep on good terms with them. (Works of Champlain, III, 96 (footnote).

(3 Sagard, Grand Voyage, I, 145. The Montagnais used the bow and arrow, club and French sword.

did more. In the 1650's, with a foolish disregard for their own safety, they began to sell firearms and ammunition to the Mohawk, weapons which proved the decisive factor in the closing stages of the struggle, since the French had long made it a cardinal point in their Indian policy not to supply their allies with guns. When necessity forced them to do so, it was too late to avert the doom that was rushing upon the Hurons. In one respect only did the Indian allies of the French possess an advantage over the Iroquois. This was in their light, swift and graceful birch-bark canoes which were responsive to the slightest pressure of the paddle. Lacking birch, the Iroquois were forced to use the bark of the elm which was inferior both in lightness and strength. Compared with the Huron and Algonkin canoe, the true Iroquois craft was slow and clumsy. Consequently they tended to avoid conflicts on the water and the birch-bark canoe became yet another prize sought by their raiding parties.

Indian military organization, compared with that of European nations, was non existent. Impressment or conscription was unknown. When war had been decided upon in tribal or national council the war chiefs would go around from village to village, soliciting aid and giving presents, but there was no compulsion.(1 Every man was free to go to war or stay at home, as he wished, but in view of the Indian's natural love of combat, his thirst for glory and his extreme sensitiveness to public opinion, there was never any lack of recruits for the warpath. Among the Iroquoians almost anyone could be a war chief, provided he was of proven valor and could get warriors to follow him. Civil and military authority was by no means necessarily, or even usually, vested in the same persons. Among the Algonkin, on the other hand, it appears that on major expeditions

(1 Works of Champlain, III, 158-9.

at least, the tribal chiefs usually led their warriors. Nominally the war chiefs had charge not only of the conduct of the war, but also of such matters as the disposal of prisoners. However, they were not always obeyed. The lack of discipline among his savage allies was the despair of Champlain. It explains, in part at least, why in the open, even in comparatively large numbers, the Indians were no match for a small body of trained European troops. But in the dark and tangled forests to which their tactics were eminently suited, they were almost invincible.

The military organization of the Iroquois differed little from that of their Huron and Algonkin foes. By European standards it was deplorably weak. To what, then, did they owe their success against enemies who surpassed them in numbers[1] and yielded naught to them in desperate valor? It is impossible to single out any one reason for their superiority. One of these we have already noted - the agricultural basis of their society - but this was an advantage enjoyed in equal measure by their Huron foes. Another, and one which deserves more than passing mention, was their political organization.

The League of the Iroquois was formed probably some time during the last third of the 16th century.[2] Since the Iroquois, in common with the other aboriginal tribes of North America, knew nothing of the art of writing and still less of keeping systematic records, the origin of the League, like that of the tribes themselves, is shrouded in a veil of frequently conflict-

(1 D. Jenness, The Indians of Canada (Ottawa, 1932), p. 306, gives the following numbers for the Five Nations at the coming of the Europeans: Seneca 7000, Mohawk 2000, Onondaga 5000, Cayuga 2000, Oneida 1000, or a total of 16,000 in all. R. G. Thwaites (Introduction to the Jesuit Relations) estimates the Algonkin population at a maximum of 90,000, though he considers 50,000 nearer the mark. The Jesuit Brebeuf in 1635 placed the Huron population at 30,000, probably a somewhat excessive estimate. (Relations VIII, 115).

(2 W. M. Beauchamp, A History of the New York Iroquois (Albany, 1905), p. 155.

ing traditions, handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. A popular and apparently plausible account declares that the initiative came from an Onondaga chief, Hiawatha, that the Mohawk were the first to approve the plan of union, being followed closely by the Oneida and Cayuga, and finally by the Seneca, whence came their designation "youngest son" as contrasted with the "elder brother" of the Mohawk. The valley of Onondaga was the site of the great council fire of the Five Nations by reason of its central geographical position and its historical associations.

The government of the confederacy was vested in a council of fifty sachems or principal chiefs, of equal rank and representative of all five nations(1, the office of sachem being hereditary through the female. It assembled at irregular intervals, whenever the necessity arose to arbitrate on intertribal problems, to receive embassies and to decide on peace or war with other tribes. Entire unanimity was required for its decisions.(2 The ease and frequency with which this seemingly difficult condition was fulfilled afford an illuminating commentary on the tribal solidarity of the Iroquois, of the extent to which individual and national life were fused into one. This federal council, the meeting and mingling of nations which almost invariably accompanied its deliberations, the clan system which cut across tribal divisions and made all members of the same clan, whether

(1 Membership in the Council was allotted as follows : Mohawk 9, Oneida 9, Onondaga 14, Cayuga 10, Seneca 8. (Beauchamp, op. cit., pp. 157-8).

(2 The decisions of the Grand Council were often influenced by the deliberations of several other bodies which had a share in the government of this unique republic. There was a class of subordinate chiefs, who had attained that eminence by address, ability or valor. This body has included in its ranks the most prominent orators and warriors of the Iroquois. These chiefs, whose character and functions were purely civil, also held their councils and exercised an influence proportional to their number and abilities. Another governing body, of particular importance in purely tribal concerns, was what the Jesuit Lafitau has called "the Senate", membership in which was open to any man whose experience and age qualified him to take part in its deliberations. The young warriors and even the women had their councils and their opinions and wishes were represented by deputies before the "Senate" as well as before the Grand Council of Sachems. (Parkman, op. cit., lvii-lviii)

Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga or Seneca, members of the same family - all these factors helped to break down the exclusiveness of each tribe and to give to the Five Nations of the Iroquois a sense of kinship and unity for which we look in vain among their Algonkin foes. And it is a well known maxim, whose truth has often been proven, that in union lies strength.

However, great as were its merits and services, the League of the Iroquois was by no means a perfect instrument. The attempt to combine local autonomy with a certain measure of federal control was a source of weakness to the League and frequently of embarrassment to its enemies, since the final decision on peace or war rested with each individual tribe. During the period under consideration we shall find it frequently happened that one tribe made a peace which the others ignored or refused to accept. It must be confessed, however, that on these occasions the embarrassment of the foe is more apparent than the damage to the League. Generally in their wars of conquest the Iroquois were a united people.(1 Another weakness of the League lay in the conflicting positions of civil and warrior chiefs. The council of sachems could not control ambitious individuals who sought profit, revenge or renown through sudden attacks on neighboring people. Many of the so-called "wars" of the Iroquois were irresponsible affairs, organized and conducted without the consent and often without the knowledge of the council. The unauthorized expeditions of rash, hot-headed youths brought reprisals which sapped the strength of the confederacy, even in victory, and helped to earn for the Iroquois a well deserved reputation for bad faith. Finally, the League had not entirely eradicated intertribal

(1 The Seneca, as the largest tribe, and the Mohawk, as the most aggressive, seem to have taken the initiative in offensive warfare, the former being largely responsible for the destruction of the Huron, Tobacco and Neutral nations, while the Mohawk harassed the St. Lawrence Algonkin and the French settlements. The Oneida, Onondaga and Cayuga usually provided contingents for all major operations.

rivalry. By virtue of their strategic position in relation to the Dutch settlements, the Mohawk kept the other four nations in a state of dependence which they resented.(1 Feeling between the Mohawk and Onondaga was so bitter in 1656 that they were on the brink of war. Such incidents indicate a lack of cohesion in the League which hastened its downfall and disruption in the face of a really determined onslaught by disciplined European troops, unified under one command. During the period 1603-1665, however, the League was not put to this test, and there can be little doubt that the strength derived from this union, imperfect as it was, contributed considerably to Iroquois success.

Our information on the political organisation of the Hurons is rather meagre, but there are some decisive features in which it closely resembles that of the Iroquois. The Huron nation was a confederacy of four distinct tribes(2, each of which had a separate organization, but at certain periods general councils of the united nations were held and at these and other councils the chiefs and principal men discussed and voted upon measures for the preservation of the country against their enemies(3. In the Huron grand council the opinion of the majority prevailed, differing here from the Iroquois.(3 The tribes were divided into clans ; they were governed by chiefs whose office was hereditary through the female ; there

(1 They had to pass through Mohawk territory on their way to trade with the Dutch and for this privilege they were obliged to pay toll. (Charlevoix, op. cit., p. 318).

(2 Lalemant gives the names of the four tribes as Attignawantan, Attigneenongnahac, Arendahron, and Tohontaenrat, and says of them, "The first two are the most important, having received the others into their country, as it were, and adopted them, - the one fifty years ago, and the other thirty. These first two speak with certainty of the settlements of their Ancestors and of the different sites of their villages for more than two hundred years back..... These two nations term each other "brother" and "sister" in the councils and assemblies." (Relations, XVI, 227).

(3 Works of Champlain, III, 159.

were two principal chiefs, one for peace and one for war, and a host of subordinate chiefs whose influence depended on their personal abilities.

In manner of life the other Iroquoian tribes closely resembled the Hurons and the Iroquois and for them a brief note will suffice.

The "Nation du Petun" or Tobacco Nation were neighbors of the Hurons and after 1640 their close confederates. Their nine villages were situated on rising spurs along the eastern side of the Blue Mountains, in the present township of Nottawasaga, Simcoe County. They derived their name from the crop which they grew for bartering, trading in it largely with other tribes. With their Huron allies they were almost annihilated in the disaster of 1649-50, but managed to retain their tribal organization. Driven from their homeland, they held for many generations a paramount influence among the western tribes, and today their descendants, under the name Wyandots, are almost the sole inheritors of the Huron name and blood.(1

Five days' journey south of the villages of the Tobacco Nation lay the frontier towns of the powerful Neutral Nation whose territory embraced the entire northern shore of Lake Erie. Though neutral in the strife between the Hurons and Iroquois, they were abundantly ferocious and waged savage war with the Algonkian tribes around Lake Michigan. In 1650-51 the Iroquois, fired by lust of conquest, turned their victorious arms against them and in the ensuing slaughter and panic-stricken flight, the Neutrals as a nation ceased to exist.

The southern shore of Lake Erie was inhabited by a kindred people, the Eries, called by the French the "Nation du Chat" (Cat Nation). Fierce and warlike, employing poisoned arrows, they were long a scourge and terror to the neighboring Senecs. But in 1655-56 they too were vanquished and

(1 Parkman, op. cit., xliii.

utterly destroyed by the Iroquois.

On the lower Susquehanna dwelt a group of tribes known to the French under the generic name "Andastes". Allies of the Hurons and fierce, resolute warriors, they engaged in intermittent warfare with the Iroquois. Though inferior in numbers to either the Hurons, Neutrals or Eries, they caused the Iroquois more trouble than all these combined and were not finally vanquished until 1675.

Around the Lower Lakes and the St. Lawrence Valley the Iroquois had by 1665 made a solitude and called it a peace. Kindred and alien tribes alike had fallen before their all conquering arms. Only three isolated little French settlements still clung tenaciously to existence. But it had not always been thus. A century earlier the fortunes of the Iroquois had been at a very low ebb indeed.(1

When, in 1535, Cartier visited Hochelaga and Stadacona, he found these villages inhabited by a people of Iroquoian stock.(2 When Champlain sailed up the St. Lawrence in 1603, these towns had vanished and the valley was the hunting ground of bands of roving Algonkin engaged in intermittent warfare with the Iroquois who lived many days' journey south of the river. What had happened during the interval is largely a matter for conjecture and many theories have been advanced in an attempt to explain the disappearance

(1 Lalemant tells us that towards the end of the 16th century the Mohawk were so reduced by the Algonkin that "there seemed to be scarcely any more of them left on earth." (Relation of 1659-60, Edna Kenton (Ed.), The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, (Toronto, 1925), p.304).

(2 This assumption is based on the fragments of dialect recorded by Cartier, on his description of the villages and of the agricultural activities of the inhabitants, on archeological evidence and on tribal traditions. A. G. Bailey contends that Stadacona was probably Mohawk and Hochelaga Onondaga. (The Significance of the Identity and Disappearance of the Laurentian Iroquois, Trans. Roy. Soc. Can., 3rd Series, Vol. XXVII, Sec. ii, p. 97 (1933)

of the Laurentian Iroquois. It may have been merely the result of periodic tribal migration. Again the Iroquoians may have been driven from the St. Lawrence by the Algonkin. The important point, however, is the settlement of the Five Nations in contiguous areas south of the St. Lawrence, thus making possible the formation of the League, which, as we have seen, occurred probably during the latter third of the 16th century.(1 The full potentialities of the League as an offensive weapon were not immediately displayed, however, as will be seen from the record of the first twenty years of French occupation of the St. Lawrence Valley.

(1 Vide supra, p. 19.

CHAPTER II

The Beginnings of New France, 1605-1629

The history of the period 1605-29 is largely the story of the development of the fur trade. Colonisation and missions occupy a very subordinate place. These years witnessed a great expansion of the trade as a result of the establishment of direct trading relations with the Hurons of Georgian Bay region. Inasmuch as the French were brought into direct contact with the Hurons through Champlain's expedition against the Iroquois in 1609, the enmity between the Five Nations and the northern tribes may be regarded as one of the prime factors in this expansion of French trade. On the progress of settlement Iroquois influence was negligible. The Mohawk, who in later years were primarily responsible for the harrying of the French settlements, were during this period largely occupied in the strife with their eastern neighbors, the Mahicans, and after 1610 rarely appeared on the St. Lawrence, and then not in the vicinity of the French settlement. In the intermittent warfare with the Iroquois the Canadian Algonkin and their Huron allies seem to have been holding their own.

The First Six Years, 1605-1608

Although the French did not make any permanent establishment in the St. Lawrence valley until 1608, the first six years (1605-1608) are not without significance in the shaping of French policy towards the hostile factions, Algonkin and Iroquois. It was during Champlain's expedition of 1605 that the foundations of French friendship with the Algonkin were laid and that the subsequent alliance between them was foreshadowed.

On May 24, 1605, "La Bonne Renommée" dropped anchor in the sheltered harbor of Tadoussac at the mouth of the Saguenay. On board a keen eyed Captain of the Royal Navy surveyed for the first time the threshhold of the land whose welfare was to be uppermost in his thoughts for the next

thirty-two years. Lately soldier in the service of Henry of Navarre, who now ruled France as Henry IV, and just returned from a geographical expedition to the West Indies, Samuel de Champlain had come now to Canada on behalf of his friend and patron, the Sieur de Chaste, to assist the trader Pont-Grave in selecting a suitable site for a settlement.

Three days after their arrival, Champlain and Pont-Gravé, accompanied by two natives whom the latter had carried back to France on a previous voyage, sought out the savages who were encamped a league from Tadoussac. After the chief had made them welcome, one of their native companions proceeded to harangue the assembly, describing the wonders of France, the good entertainment he had received there, and the kindly reception accorded to him by the king. The significant note of his speech was struck in the statement that "they might feel assured His Majesty wished them well and desired to people their country, and to make peace with their enemies (who are the Iroquois) or send forces to vanquish them."(1 It was this point upon which the chief immediately seized when making his reply. "After smoking some time, he began to address the whole gathering, speaking with gravity, pausing sometimes a little and then resuming his speech, saying to them that in truth they ought to be very glad to have His Majesty for their great friend. They answered all with one voice, "Ho, ho, ho", which is to say "Yes, yes." Continuing his speech, he said that he was well content that His said Majesty should people their country, and make war on their enemies, and that there was no nation in the world to which they wished more good than to the French. Finally he gave them to understand the advantage and profit they might receive from His said Majesty."(2

(1 Works of Champlain, I, 100.
(2 Ibid., I, 100-101.

In this exchange of courtesies were foreshadowed the main features of the informal bargain struck six years later which involved on the side of the Indians supplying furs to the French, on the side of Champlain assisting them in their wars.

Champlain has been greatly blamed by some historians for having thus committed himself heedlessly and recklessly to a policy which embroiled him and the future colony with the most formidable savages on the continent. Yet it is difficult to see what other course was open to him. A state of war already existed between the Iroquois and the Algonkian tribes of the St. Lawrence region. Of the former he had only the information which his savage allies could impart and which he could acquire from his own observations during this summer. On the one hand, he learnt from his Montagnais acquaintances that the Iroquois infested the banks of the St. Lawrence, and prevented some tribes(1 from coming down to the Lower River to trade.(2 On the other hand, the events of the summer tended to convey the impression that the Iroquois were more of a nuisance than a serious menace. On his arrival at Tadoussac he had found the Algonkin, Etchemin and Montagnais celebrating a recent victory over the Iroquois(3 and during the course of the summer, while he was exploring and mapping the St. Lawrence, another Algonkin war party returned victorious from an encounter with the enemy near Lake Champlain.(4 There was no reason at this time to believe that the Iroquois were very formidable. It was impossible then to foresee that they would become the terrible power they were forty years later.

Considerations of settlement, no less than of trade, made it imperative

(1 probably the Hurons and Algonkin of the Ottawa.
(2 Works of Champlain, I, 157.
(3 Ibid., 105.
(4 Ibid., 178.

that the French secure the goodwill of their nearest neighbors, the Laurentian Algonkin. Cartier's experience had shown the folly of antagonizing the neighboring savages. Algonkin hordes roamed the banks of the St. Lawrence. In the autumn they came in great numbers to fish near Quebec. The Iroquois, on the other hand, were several days' journey south of the River. But, it may be argued, the friendship of the Algonkin did not necessarily require French participation in their wars. Neutrality, however, is very difficult when one's soil is the battleground of opposing factions, and especially when those factions are passionate, hot-headed savages. As long as the French came to the St. Lawrence only for a few weeks during the summer to trade, they could keep clear of entanglements in forest politics. Once they had formed a permanent establishment in the valley, however, it is difficult to see how they could have avoided becoming involved in savage warfare, presuming, of course, the continuance of the strife between Algonkin and Iroquois. Champlain's friendship with the Algonkin did not preclude the possibility of peace. Indeed in the course of his explorations this summer he fixed upon an island at the mouth of the St. Maurice as a suitable place for a settlement, not only because of the protection it would afford to the Algonkin, but also because if a strong post were established here the French might make friends with the Iroquois and with the other tribes.(1

Apart from the interests of trade and settlement, there was still another reason for Champlain aligning himself with the Algonkin. Exploration was one of his primary concerns, and the Algonkin and their Huron allies controlled most of the territory which he hoped to explore, possessed the best means, birchbark canoes, of travelling through that territory, and supplied the furs from which he hoped to finance his explorations, as well as being quite indispensable as guides.

(1 Works of Champlain, I, 157.

From the standpoint of trade, settlement and exploration there were strong arguments in favour of co-operation with the Algonkin. When Champlain returned to France at the end of the summer his own experience had given him no reason to question the wisdom of the policy enunciated at Tadoussac at the beginning of the season through the medium of Pont-Gravé's savage interpreter. It was to be five years, however, before he had the opportunity of carrying it into execution.

On his return to France in the autumn of 1603, Champlain discovered that the venerable Chaste had died shortly after the ships had sailed for the St. Lawrence. At the close of the same year the Huguenot, Monts, was given a monopoly of the trade in peltry for ten years, in return for which he undertook to take out sixty colonists each year. There is no reason to suppose that the wars of Algonkin and Iroquois in the St. Lawrence region had any influence on the selection of Acadia as the locale of Monts' colonizing efforts.(1 He himself had visited the St. Lawrence in 1599 with Chauvin and Pont-Gravé and had been favorably impressed with the region. But the fate of the colonists left to winter at Tadoussac on that occasion was probably a potent argument in favour of seeking a more southerly location where the climate was less rigorous. Thus the following four years were spent by Champlain in the two settlements of Ste. Croix and Port Royal, whence, as official geographer, he undertook a detailed exploration of the Atlantic coast from Cape Breton to southern Massachusetts. In the summer of 1607 Monts' monopoly was suddenly revoked, but to compensate him for the

(1 Cf. however, Bailey's thesis that Cartier's kidnapping exploits were responsible for the historic enmity of the Five Nations towards the French, and that "This hostility contributed to the causes which led to the founding of Port Royal and prevented the French from securing a foothold in the interior half a century before the first Dutch and English establishments." (The Significance of the Identity and Disappearance of the Laurentian Iroquois, op. cit., p. 106)

the losses he had sustained in his colonizing ventures, it was granted to him again unconditionally, for one year only. Having found Port Royal a very unsuitable base from which to attempt to enforce his monopoly, Monts, probably on the advice of Champlain, decided to change the scene of his operations to the St. Lawrence Valley, which, furthermore, promised a richer harvest of furs. Thus at the beginning of June,1608, we find Champlain back at Tadoussac preparing to establish a post further inland, which, it was hoped, would give Monts an advantage over his competitors when trade was thrown open to all at the expiration of the monopoly.

From the information collected during his explorations of 1603 Champlain had fixed upon Quebec as a suitable spot for the proposed trading post. As its Indian name signified, it was the point at which the river narrowed and was thus strategically situated to command the upper St. Lawrence valley and the trade with the savages of the west. At the base of the cliff was a fine natural harbor and a short distance away, near the tiny River St. Charles, were fertile meadows. Although at this time ocean-going vessels did not pass beyond Tadoussac because of unfamiliarity with the channel and the banks and rocks which marred its course, Quebec could be reached without difficulty in the smaller pinnace or shallop. All these considerations pointed to Quebec as an ideal base for trading, exploring and colonizing operations in the St. Lawrence Valley. Looking back across the centuries it is easy for us now to appreciate the wisdom of Champlain's choice, but then it was not so apparent. In the autumn of 1608 there was no reason to believe that the erection of the rough frame building at the foot of the cliff was an event of more than ordinary significance. Who then could have foreseen that it marked the beginning of a permanent French occupation of the St. Lawrence Valley?

The circumstances under which the new colony was born were not auspicious and were destined to linger on through its long and troubled infancy. Quebec was by origin an outpost of the fur trade and since it is axiomatic that the interests of the fur trade and of settlement are mutually opposed, this beginning did not augur well for the future progress of the colony. Then, too, in the late summer of 1608 Champlain seems to have committed himself definitely to active aid of the Algonkin against their Iroquois enemies.(1 Thus at the outset were introduced the two factors, fur trade and Iroquois warfare, which probably more than any other were to retard the development of New France.

In the following pages we shall attempt to determine the influence of the Iroquois upon the development of the French colony on the St. Lawrence during the first sixty years of its existence. Since in this early period French endeavor flowed along three main channels, the fur trade, settlement, and missions, it will be convenient to treat this theme under these three topical headings. Let us consider first, then, what influence, if any, the Iroquois exerted upon the fur trade in the period 1608-29.

(1 Describing his meeting with the Algonkin and Hurons in June 1609, Champlain tells us that "some ten moons ago ..... Iroquet's son had come to see me, when I had given him a kind reception and told him that Pont-Grave and I wished to help them against their enemies" and that he had assured them, "I had no other intention than to make war ..... and that my only desire was to perform what I had promised them." (Works of Champlain, II, 69-70)

The Fur Trade, 1608-1629

When in September 1608 Monts' three vessels weighed anchor for France, the first period of monopolies, inaugurated by Chauvin's company in 1600, came to an end. The year's unconditional monopoly had enabled Monts and his partners to recoup to some extent the losses sustained in the Acadian venture, so the profits of the trade this year must have been considerable. The new factory at Quebec seemed to assure them of virtual control of a large area of the best fur country. Twenty-eight men had been left to winter there with Champlain and though by the summer of 1609 disease had reduced their numbers to eight, their continued presence in the country would, it was thought, give Monts and his associates an advantage over their rivals in the period of open trading which was about to begin.

From the outset the fur trade was linked closely with exploration and with the vicissitudes of Indian warfare. If Quebec was to Monts only a key to the commerce of the Great River, it was to Champlain also a fixed point on the way to the Orient, a base from which explorations might be conducted with a view to finding the long sought northern passage to China.(1 Since the king's sympathy with the explorer's aims did not extend to the point of providing the necessary financial backing, the funds for the proposed explorations had to come from the profits of the trade and this depended on the goodwill and security of the natives of the St. Lawrence region. Champlain was still further dependent on the Indians for

(1 According to Champlain, the French objective in New France was to find the northern passage to the East. A settlement was to be founded in the hope of "attaining more easily to the completion of this enterprise, since the voyage would begin in this land beyond the ocean along which the search for the desired passage is to be made." (Works of Champlain, I, 228-9).

guidance and even for actual transportation, since the swiftly flowing, rapid strewn streams were navigable only by canoe. In the attainment of the main object of his explorations, the discovery of the Northwest passage, Champlain was foredoomed to failure, though he knew it not. But he was more successful in achieving what was to him a secondary, though to the fur trader the primary, objective, the extension of trade, since friendly tribes encountered in the course of his wanderings were induced to come down to the French posts to trade. Without the co-operation of the Indians exploration of the interior was well nigh impossible.(1 The price they asked was assistance in their wars. Thus Indian warfare, exploration and the fur trade were almost inextricably bound together.

In the spring of 1609 the trade was thrown open to all comers. Monts and his associates had to be prepared to meet ever increasing competition. Anticipating this, they had authorized the erection of the factory at Quebec in 1608. However, they were soon to find that possession of this strategic position gave them no advantage commensurate with the expense of upkeep. Much more valuable was the unique place in the Indians' affection which Champlain was soon to gain by aiding them in their wars against the Iroquois.

In June 1609, after a consultation with Pont-Gravé, Champlain decided to continue his exploration of the interior and incidentally to carry out the promises made to the Algonkin in 1603 and 1608. Accordingly, he set out from Quebec on the 19th of the month for the Iroquois country, accompanied

(1 "I came to the conclusion that it was very necessary to assist them, both to engage them the more to love us, and also to facilitate my enterprises and explorations, which apparently could only be carried out with their help....." (Works of Champlain, IV, 227-8)

by a band of Montagnais. About twenty leagues above the post, near the little island of St. Eloi, they came upon a body of some two or three hundred Hurons and Algonkin, who, it transpired, had come to meet the French for the purpose of forming an alliance with them.(1 Curiosity and the rumours of an expedition against the hated enemy had proven a magnet powerful enough to draw the Hurons down to the St. Lawrence danger zone. Hitherto, they seem to have been content to receive their supply of European goods through intertribal trade with the Algonkin.(2 The meeting of Champlain and the Hurons as a result of this first expedition against the Iroquois had important implications for the trade, chief of which was the establishment of direct trading relations between the French and this populous nation of the Georgian Bay region. The significance of this development will become more apparent later.

In addition to bringing the French into direct contact with the Hurons, the expedition of 1609 yielded much valuable information from the standpoint of exploration. In the canoes of his savage allies Champlain followed the River Richelieu to its source in the lake to which he has given his name and had traversed this lake through the greater part of its length before encountering an Iroquois war party near the point which was later to become the site of Fort Ticonderoga. On the journey up the river no signs of human life were evident. The country, though pleasant and abounding in game, was uninhabited on account of the wars, the natives having withdrawn from the rivers to avoid being easily surprised. Champlain, however, seems to have considered this area a potential field for French

(1 Works of Champlain, II, 70.

(2 Ibid., I, 164.

enterprise, since on his return to France Monts and his partners applied, unsuccessfully, for a monopoly of the trade in the newly discovered regions.(1

The details of this first memorable clash between Champlain and the Iroquois are too well known to need repetition here. Suffice it to say that the Iroquois, utterly demoralized by the deadly effect of European firearms, were routed, and the allies returned home triumphant with prisoners reserved for torture. Victory served to cement the alliance between the French and the Laurentian Indians. It opened up, too, possibilities of further exploration. The Hurons promised, in return for continued support against the Iroquois, to conduct Champlain to their country, while in return for similar assistance the Montagnais offered to take him up the St. Maurice to Hudson's Bay.(2 At the mouth of the Richelieu the allies parted for their respective homes with mutual protestations of friendship and promises to come down to trade and to go on the warpath in the following summer. Champlain accompanied the Montagnais as far as Quebec and on September 5 he and Pont-Gravé sailed for France, leaving Pierre Chauvin in charge of the fifteen interpreters and agents who were to winter at Quebec.(3

After their failure to secure a monopoly of the trade in the recently explored region, Monts and his partners debated for some time on their future course of action. In view of the goodwill of the Algonkin and Hurons towards Champlain, it was finally decided to maintain the factory at Quebec and to push on the exploration of the western part of the St. Lawrence Valley. Thus, on June 4, 1610, we find Champlain setting

(1 Works of Champlain, II, 111.
(2 Ibid., II, 119.
(3 Ibid., 108.

out for the appointed rendez-vous at the mouth of the Richelieu, where the Hurons had promised to assemble four hundred men. With him he took four pinnaces laden with merchandise for the barter with the Algonkin and Hurons. In his wake followed several other traders who had flocked to the river this summer in large numbers. He and the Montagnais, who had joined him at Three Rivers, reached the meeting place on the 19th of June. Here news was brought that the Algonkin had encountered a hundred Iroquois strongly barricaded in a rough fort further up the river. The Algonkin and the Montagnais, who had rushed off, leaving Champlain and his companions to find their way as best they could, were beaten off with loss of some of their most prominent warriors, but once again European firearms, of which the Iroquois were still in deadly fear, saved the situation. In the encounter Champlain and his men and also the crew of another shallop participated, but the majority of the traders contented themselves with stripping the dead bodies of their blood soaked furs, to the unconcealed disgust of the Indians.(1

On the morrow the barter with the Algonkin, who had come down to the number of about two hundred, took place. In helpless indignation Champlain and Pont-Gravé saw the new traders, who greatly outnumbered them, secure the lion's share of the furs.(2 On the following day the Hurons arrived, greatly disappointed at having missed the fight. Their barter occupied the next three days. When the other traders had departed, Champlain persuaded the Hurons to take back a French youth (possibly Brulé) to live with them, while he in return took one of their young men back

(1 Works of Champlain, II, 125-154.

(2 Ibid., 155. "It was doing them a great favour to search out for them strange tribes, in order that they might later on carry off the whole profit without running any risk or hazard."

to France with him. In so doing he had two objects in mind, to train selected French and Indian youths as interpreters by providing the opportunity for each to learn the language of the other, and to furnish, in the persons of these youths, additional surety for the return of the Indians to the barter in the following summer. In subsequent years other traders were not slow to adopt the practice thus inaugurated, but with less success than Champlain, since he by virtue of the assistance given to them in their wars occupied a unique place in their confidence and affections.(1 The trade was poor this year owing to the number of vessels participating.(2 It is conceivable that it would have been much poorer if there had been no prospects of an Iroquois war to bring down the Hurons and Algonkin in such numbers.

The season of 1611, the third year of open trading, was in most respects a repetition of the previous year, except that competition was even keener than before. At Tadoussac the Indians showed that the lessons of the previous year had not been lost upon them when they insisted on waiting until many vessels arrived before beginning the barter, so that they might drive a harder bargain. On his arrival in May, Champlain proceeded at once to the Lachine Rapids, where the Hurons and Algonkin had promised to assemble for the barter. Two hundred Hurons arrived, bringing with them the youth who had passed the winter with them. Their chiefs explained that more than four hundred had intended to come down, but many had been deterred by a report, spread by an escaped Iroquois prisoner, that Champlain was to go to the Rapids with six hundred Iroquois to await

(1 Works of Champlain, II, 201-205, 206.

(2 Ibid., 146. ".....many will long remember the loss they sustained that year."

the Algonkin and kill them all.[1] As in the previous year, a horde of other traders had followed him, though he had taken no pains at Quebec to hide his disinclination for their society. Again they found themselves with quantities of goods left on hand, since the thirty-nine canoes of Algonkin, on their way to war, brought few furs. The Hurons were so frightened by the number of new faces that they withdrew some distance up the river, whence they sent word to Champlain to come to them secretly. The elders expressed confidence in him and desire for an alliance with him, but distrust of the other traders whom "only love of gain and avarice had brought thither."[2] It was made plain that Champlain owed his place in their esteem to the aid which he had given them against the Iroquois.

This fact was strikingly demonstrated in the following summer when Champlain, contrary to his usual custom, remained in France on other business and thus failed to appear at the appointed rendez-vous at the Rapids where some two thousand Algonkin and Hurons had assembled in expectation of finding him. They were greatly disappointed and annoyed at his non-appearance, but promised to come down in the following year, when Champlain's agents assured them that he would be there. When rival traders spread the report that he was dead, the Indians, believing that he would not return to the country, and aggrieved at the treatment they had received at the hands of the other traders,[3] failed to come down in 1615 and we shall find Champlain having to go in search of them. It appears, then, that in the opening years of French occupation of the St. Lawrence Valley, the hostility of the Iroquois was actually a boon to the trade and

[1] Works of Champlain, II, 189-90.
[2] Ibid., 189.
[3] Ibid., 285.

and the prospects of an expedition against them the best bait with which to lure the Algonkin and Hurons down to the barter.(1

The experience of the three years of open trade sufficed to convince the partners of Monts that the factory, instead of proving an advantage, was rapidly becoming a burden, and they announced their intention of withdrawing from the company. It had convinced Champlain that no substantial progress could be made, either in exploration or in bringing the Indians to a knowledge of the Christian faith - another object dear to his heart - until some sort of regulation was once more introduced into the trade. With this end in view, he spent the year 1612 in France trying to organise into a new company the better class of traders who frequented the St. Lawrence Valley and to secure for it the protection of some powerful noble whose influence at court might ward off the danger of sudden repeal, such as had befallen the companies of Chauvin and Monts. On account of the delay caused by the death of the "protector" first chosen, the Comte de Soissons, and the opposition of the St. Malo merchants, the final articles were not drawn up until the spring of 1614.(2 Their importance for us here consists in the fact that they brought to an end the period of open trading and enabled Champlain to resume his explorations and an aggressive Iroquois policy.

(1 The fact that they were coming down for an expedition against the Iroquois enabled the Hurons to pass freely through the territory of the Algonkin of the Ottawa, who had hitherto kept control of the trade in their own hands, acting as middlemen between the Hurons and the French.

(2 The shares were to be divided into three portions, one to be subscribed for by the merchants of Rouen, and the other two by those of St. Malo and La Rochelle. When the latter failed to take up their share, nothing remained but to divide the whole of the shares among the merchants of Rouen and St. Malo. To the company was granted the monopoly of the trade from the River Matane in Gaspe peninsula west for the space of eleven years. Henri, Prince de Condé, was named Viceroy of New France and was to receive from the company the sum of one thousand crowns a year. Champlain as his lieutenant was to receive a salary and to have at his disposal every summer four men from each vessel in the river, to use as he wished at Quebec, in his explorations or to make war on the Iroquois. (H. P. Biggar, The Early

During the season of 1615, while negotiations were in progress for the formation of the new company, only seven vessels licensed by Conde were allowed to participate in the trade, and these were required to furnish Champlain with four men each, in case he wished to undertake further exploration or an expedition against the Iroquois. However, when Champlain arrived at the Rapids, he found no Indians to greet him. From three canoes of Algonkin who appeared some days later he learnt the explanation. The lies of rival traders in the previous year had been very effective. Some twelve hundred Indians, despairing of any further assistance from the French, had gone on the warpath instead of coming down to trade. The merchants, who had made large purchases in the hope that the Indians would come down as usual, were appalled at the prospect of a lost season and greatly relieved when Champlain decided to go up the Ottawa to the Algonkin country to encourage those who had remained to come down to the barter and to assure them of his desire to help them in their wars. At the same time he thought to investigate the statement of one of his interpreters, Vignau, that while he was wintering with the Algonkin he had visited the northern sea, on whose shores he had seen fragments of the wreckage of an English ship. Champlain and his five men struggled painfully up the Ottawa as far as the Isle des Allumettes before the imposture of Vignau was unmasked. The journey, however, was not entirely fruitless. The misunderstanding was cleared away and eighty canoes laden with furs came down to the Rapids, enabling the merchants to secure a good season's trade. Champlain seems also to have announced his intention to build a habitation at the Rapids, since the Algonkin chiefs assured him that if he did so, they would lead their nation back to its old home there under the shelter of the fort.(1 Two young men

(1 Works of Champlain, II, 281.

were sent back with the Indians in order to keep them friendly, learn something of the country, and put them under the obligation of coming back to barter in the following year.

In the summer of 1614 trade in the St. Lawrence Valley was confined to the ships of the new company[1] and the factory at Quebec became its property. Champlain, to whom we owe most of our knowledge of this early period, remained in France again and thus we have no definite information as to what happened in the valley this year. His non-appearance, after the promises of the previous year, was a great disappointment to his savage allies, and an expedition which they had planned to undertake together against the Iroquois had to be postponed until another year.

Thus it was with joy, not unmixed with misgiving, that the Indians welcomed Champlain at the Rapids towards the end of June, 1615. They impressed upon him most particularly the fact that "they could hardly come to us if we did not help them, because the Iroquois, their ancient foes, were continually along the route and kept the passage closed to them."[2] After a consultation with Pont-Grave, Champlain decided to visit the country of the Hurons and to assist them in their wars.[3] They promised to furnish twenty-five hundred men, while he in turn engaged to bring with him as many men as possible. After putting affairs in order at Quebec in anticipation of his absence for some months, he set out with two Frenchmen and a small Huron escort for the Huron country, whither the Recollet priest,

(1 The La Rochelle traders who had refused to join the company somehow in this summer obtained from Condé a passport into the St. Lawrence for one of their vessels. This was a direct infringement of the monopoly and was the cause of much litigation between Condé, the Company, and the merchants of La Rochelle, as well as a fruitful source of trouble later. (Biggar, Early Trading Companies, pp. 96-7)

(2 Works of Champlain, IV, 227.

(3 Ibid., pp. 227-8.

Father Le Caron, had preceded him with twelve other Frenchmen.

The route via the Ottawa, Lake Nipissing, French River and Georgian Bay was exceedingly arduous and trying to the French. Arriving in the Huron country before the warriors had assembled, Champlain spent the interval in going by easy stages from village to village to the rendez-vous on Lake Simcoe. The young interpreter, Brulé, was sent with a dozen Indians on a hazardous mission, which took them through the Seneca country, to inform the Andastes of the lower Susquehanna of the impending offensive. These people, allies of the Hurons and themselves in bitter conflict with the Iroquois, had offered to supply a contingent of five hundred men.

Champlain and eight Frenchmen set out with the main body of the Hurons at the beginning of September, travelling by way of Trent River. After crossing the eastern end of Lake Ontario, the party concealed their canoes on the south shore and made the rest of the journey by land. On October 10 they arrived before an Iroquois town[1] strongly fortified in typical Iroquoian fashion with four concentric rows of palisades. The Iroquois defenders still feared firearms, but all Champlain's strategy was nullified by the lack of discipline among his savage allies. The arquebuses drove the Iroquois from the gallery, but the Hurons failed to take advantage of this. Efforts to set fire to the palisade failed because of careless placing of the faggots. With two of their chiefs and fifteen warriors killed and Champlain wounded in the leg, the Hurons withdrew, discouraged, to await reinforcements. In the ensuing four days several skirmishes took place, the French saving the Hurons from defeat in every instance. It was noticed this time that the Iroquois, as they retreated, pro-

[1] According to Beauchamp (op. cit., pp. 170-171) archeological evidence points to the conclusion that this was an Oneida town, a short distance southeast of Lake Oneida.

tested volubly against the interference in their fights of the French whom they had never harmed.(1 When the Andastes did not appear, the Hurons started a hasty retreat on October 16, bearing their wounded in litters. Two days after their departure, Brulé and his Andastes arrived, but finding their allies gone, withdrew without doing anything. The whole affair had been a fiasco from beginning to end but through no fault of Champlain's. The blame must rest entirely on the Hurons, through the undisciplined frenzy of their assault, their refusal to listen to advice and the ease with which they were discouraged by minor reverses.

This third encounter with the Iroquois had far-reaching consequences. While it may be doubted whether the Iroquois cherished a lasting resentment against the French because of this incident, it is hardly to be questioned that it stimulated their aggressiveness. They had discovered that the French, in spite of their firearms, were not invincible. They had beaten them off once, why not again ? By the same token the Hurons were discouraged and their faith in the French shaken.

If, in the long run, the expedition of 1615 by strengthening the self-confidence of the Iroquois had unfortunate results for New France, the same cannot be said for its immediate and direct effects on the fur trade, which were decidedly beneficial. Champlain passed the winter of 1615-16 in the Huron country and employed his time to advantage in visiting neighboring nations, among them the Tobacco Nation and the Cheveux Relevés, whom he invited to come down to the Rapids to trade.(2 Just as before 1609 the Hurons had received French goods through the Algonkin, so the tribes of this region had hitherto obtained their stock of European articles by trade with

(1 Works of Champlain, III, 77.
(2 Ibid., pp. 95-97.

the Hurons. If they could be induced to trade directly with the French, not only would the middleman's profit which fell to the Hurons be eliminated, but the volume of trade would be increased. Champlain, of course, hoped also to extend with their aid his knowledge of the region to the west and to the north. He was, in fact, on his way to visit the Nipissings, who had promised to conduct him further afield, when a quarrel between the Hurons and a group of Algonkin wintering in the village of Cahiagué forced him to return, and the opportunity was lost. The record of his observations on Huron life and customs forms a valuable addition to our knowledge of this nation at the height of its power.(1

After having urged as many nations as possible to come to the barter at the Rapids during that summer, Champlain set out on May 20, 1616 for Quebec, a journey that lasted forty days, and almost immediately after his arrival there sailed for France. Before his Huron host departed from Quebec, he promised that as soon as possible a fort should be built at the Rapids to hold the Iroquois in check and render the passage of the river safe.

The expedition of 1615-16 was the last of Champlain's exploring ventures. Hereafter his efforts were to be devoted to the promotion of settlement and to straightening out the tangled affairs of the company. In the summer of 1617 the company reaped the fruits of his labours, since this year the tribes which he had visited during the winter of 1615-16 came down to the Rapids for the first time. News, probably unfounded in fact,(2 that the Dutch, now trading up the Hudson, had concluded a treaty

(1 Champlain estimated the population at this time at 30,000 souls in eighteen villages. (Works of Champlain, III, 122)

(2 Beauchamp, (op. cit.) 173.

with the Iroquois seemed to indicate, however, that little hope could be entertained of the French establishing trading connections in that quarter.

In 1618 the barter was held at Three Rivers and the concourse of savages was greater than ever. Again they asked for help in their wars, but Champlain postponed it until another year, because they had failed him in the previous year when the time was more opportune. Discovery this year of the bodies of two Frenchmen bearing every indication of having been done to death by foul play, had not put him in a very amiable mood. Fear of injuring the trade by alienating the savages, not unmixed with fear of the numerical superiority of the savages, deterred him from taking summary proceedings against the suspects, so he decided to let the matter rest until the following year in the hope that definite evidence would be uncovered. Then with the three hundred soldiers that the king had promised him he might secure justice. In the meantime he refused to help the savages. However, in the following year he was forced to remain in France to fight the intrigues of disaffected shareholders to oust him from his position as lieutenant of the Viceroy. Hence we have almost no information on what took place this summer in the St. Lawrence. When, in June 1620, Champlain returned to New France, he found the factory at Quebec falling into ruin through neglect and he was kept too busy trying to restore it to a semblance of decency to attend the barter at the Rapids. We may presume, however, that things went on much as usual, since this was the only piece of business to which the factors did pay attention. During these years there is no mention of the Iroquois. Evidently their activities were not injurious to the trade. The radius of French influence steadily expanded, new tribes coming down almost every year.

An investigation into the affairs of the colony conducted by the Sieur Dolu on behalf of the Viceroy, Montmorency[1], had disclosed that the company had been scandalously neglectful of its obligations in regard to colonisation and defence. Its monopoly was withdrawn at the close of the season of 1620, though it should legally have run on until 1625, and conferred on two Huguenot merchants of Rouen, William de Caen and his nephew Emery, under conditions very similar to those which had previously obtained. The shareholders of the old company appealed against this decision and since the king had given no reply when the season of 1621 opened, two of their vessels participated in the trade this summer. Disturbances occasioned thereby occupied Champlain's attention and again we have no precise information on the extent of the trade this season.

In 1622 negotiations were set on foot, with Champlain's encouragement, to end the warfare between Algonkin and Iroquois that had been going on for over fifty years.[2] The lull in hostilities consequent upon this development had a favorable reaction on trade. In the summer of 1623 more than sixty canoes of Hurons and Algonkin alone arrived for the barter at the mouth of the Richelieu. On the 27th of July arrived other tribes who dwelt further west, complaining bitterly of the treatment meted out to them

(1 Towards the end of the year 1619 Condé had sold his office to the Duc de Montmorency, Admiral of France.

(2 Champlain's advice to them was that "they should live at peace with one another and that we would assist them ..... peace which would bring a great benefit to our doors, namely an increase in traffic, greater facility for discovery, safety for our savages who go in quest of beavers, but do not dare to go into certain parts where these abound, because they are afraid of their enemies, though hitherto they have always worked in these places." (Works of Champlain, V, 74)

by the Hurons and Algonkin through whose territory they had to pass.[1] In the following year the concourse of savages at the barter in the Upper St. Lawrence was still greater. Among them were thirty-five canoes of Iroquois who had come both to trade and to confirm the peace. At the end of the trading there were the customary festivities, rendered even more joyful this year by the conclusion of peace with the Iroquois.[2] Hopes ran high that a new era had dawned for the trade and prosperity of New France.

During the summer of 1625 Champlain remained in France on personal business and we have no record of the trade this year. Presumably it was good and it is likely that the Iroquois participated, since they were present in the following year. In 1626 prospects for French-Iroquois trade seemed bright. News was brought that the Mohawk had slain five Dutchmen who were aiding their enemies, the Mahican.[3]

These hopes were soon dashed, however. During the winter of 1626-7 presents and wampum were sent by the Mahican to the Montagnais and Algonkin, urging them to come to their assistance. At a council held near Quebec no decision was made, some of the chiefs favoring,

(1 These two nations were reluctant to forego the middleman's profit which they had hitherto enjoyed. The Hurons tried to bar the passage of these other savage traders, while the Algonkin of the Isle not only levied on them a heavy toll, but even tried to rob them of their furs. (Abbé C. H. Laverdière (Ed.) Oeuvres de Samuel de Champlain (Quebec, 1870), VI, 62). Sagard notes that the Algonkin of the Isle were accustomed to levy a toll on passing canoes, but when a Frenchman was with the party they desisted for fear of reprisals when they came down to the barter. This was still another reason for sending interpreters back with the savages when they returned home. (Histoire, III, 79)

(2 Hostilities between the Hurons and Iroquois evidently continued unabated. Sagard states that during his stay in Huronia in the winter of 1624-5 sixty Iroquois were taken prisoner. (Histoire, II, 409).

(3 Laverdière, op. cit., VI, 129.

others opposing, the proposal. Champlain was gravely displeased. "I could not consent to such a piece of faithlessness ..... On the other hand, wherever I might find the Iroquois, I would assist them as friends against the savages living near the Dutch."(1 At another council held near Three Rivers in May it was decided to wait until all the nations had assembled for the barter. Unfortunately, some of the Algonkin had already returned home with the intention of going to war, and in June nine or ten young Montagnais hotheads captured three Iroquois on Lake Champlain. One of the prisoners escaped, but the other two were taken to the trading rendez-vous at the mouth of the Richelieu and maltreated. Emery de Caen, who was in charge of the barter, sent an emergency call to Champlain, who came down from Quebec and prevailed upon the savages to send a deputation to the Iroquois with presents, apologizing for the incident. On July 24 an embassy was sent consisting of one of the prisoners, one Frenchman and three others. A month later news arrived of the murder of the ambassadors by a few Onondaga who happened to be visiting the Mohawk and were enraged by the outrages committed by the Algonkin warriors who had gone on the warpath. This destroyed all hope of peace.(2 On the 20th of September the savages told Champlain that a party of Iroquois was on its way to make war on them and the French. "Thus by the action of a few rash young warriors the peace concluded after so many efforts, and calculated, had it continued, to be so rich in good

(1 Works of Champlain, V, 216-17.

(2 Ibid., 251. "Murder of one of our own men in this fashion was such a serious offence that, if we did not show our displeasure, we must allow ourselves to be considered by all the tribes as lacking in courage, and so run the risk of frequently receiving similar affronts unless we did everything possible to punish them."

results for the French trade, was irrevocably broken."[1]

This breach of peace was made the more ominous by the fact that shortly afterwards the Mahican were so thoroughly beaten by the Mohawk that they left the Hudson region. The only barrier to the free use of the Hudson-Richelieu waterway by the Iroquois was removed with the enemy which had for some years diverted a considerable part of Mohawk energy from the St. Lawrence. The full weight of Mohawk fury could now be directed north. At the same time, with the purchase of Mahican lands by the Dutch in 1630 and thereafter, the Mohawk were brought into direct contact with the traders of New Netherland and Dutch guns ere long were to strengthen Iroquois offensive power.

The effects of the resumption of hostilities were not felt immediately. Indeed in the summer of 1627 the trade was better than it had been for some time, amounting to about 22,000 furs, as against approximately 15 to 20,000 for an ordinary year.[2]

In the immediate future the potential danger from the Five Nations was overshadowed by the very real menace from the English. During the two years following, Champlain was too concerned with the exploits of the English adventurers, the Kirkes, and with the task of feeding the starving little settlement at Quebec to give much attention to the trade or to the Iroquois. In the early summer of 1629, with the colony in desperate straits, he did indeed contemplate a raid on a Mohawk village to seize their supplies of corn.[3] On July 5th of that year, however, Quebec, literally starved into submission, surrendered to David Kirke and for three years New France remained

(1 Biggar, Early Trading Companies, 129.
(2 Ibid.
(3 Laverdiere, op. cit., VI, 190.

a possession of the British crown. During these years, while negotiations for the return of the colony dragged on, a Scottish and English company enjoyed the trade both in the St. Lawrence region and along the Atlantic coast. If the harvest of furs reaped on the St. Lawrence in the season of 1630[1] is a reliable indication of the volume of trade during this period, Iroquois hostility had as yet made no apparent difference.

This seems a convenient place at which to pause to gather up the main threads of the story of the early fur trade before turning to the tale of priest and settler during this same period (1608-29). What, in short, was the influence of the Iroquois on the fur trade during these twenty years? The answer would seem to be that their hostility was an asset rather than a liability. Against the background of warring tribes Champlain had played his part well, as far as the traders were concerned. He had made the best of a situation which existed on his arrival in the country. By his active co-operation with the St. Lawrence Indians he had secured their friendship. Through his expeditions against the Iroquois he had been brought into contact with new tribes who had been induced to come down to swell the volume of French trade at the Rapids. Through them even more distant tribes were enmeshed in the net of French commerce. His expeditions against the Five Nations had not made impossible a reconciliation with them, as the peace of 1624 showed, and this peace was broken through no fault of his. The traders, who may be presumed to be reasonably good judges of their own interest, evidently thought that Iroquois hostility was not undesirable. Says Sagard, "I had hoped to promote a peace between the Hurons and the Iroquois in order that Christianity

(1 Laverdière, op. cit., VI, 329. "They had brought back 300,000 livres weight of furs."

might be spread everywhere and the roads to trade opened with many nations who were inaccessible, but several gentlemen of the Company advised me that it was not expedient, since if the Hurons were at peace with the Iroquois, the said Iroquois would lead the Hurons to trade with the Dutch and divert them from Quebec which is more distant."[1] In the light of subsequent events we may well question the wisdom of their attitude, but it is more than doubtful whether the enterprising Recollet could have realized his hopes, even given the opportunity. The argument does imply that the "gentlemen" were well satisfied with the trade under existing conditions. Unfortunately for them, another factor beyond their control was soon to make itself felt, namely, Dutch activity on the Hudson. In the 'forties and 'fifties it was to be a very different story.

Settlement 1608-1629

As we have noted earlier, settlement in New France was closely linked with the fur trade. If the fur trade was profitable, as it seems to have been, colonization might have been expected to proceed at a corresponding tempo. But the government of France, in committing the settlement of the new colony into the hands of monopolists, had not taken into account two vital factors. One of these was the passionate love, almost worship, of the soil of France which burned in the breasts of her sons, making them even more loath than men of other nations to leave their native shores. The other was the seemingly obvious fact that colonization and the fur trade are not congenial bedfellows. We might mention a third factor, the hostility of the Iroquois, but this seems to have less importance than some historians have assigned to it. Especially is this true

[1] Sagard, Histoire, IV, 811.

of the period at present under consideration. In the following pages we shall attempt to show that not the Iroquois, but the trading companies, were to blame for the deplorable weakness of the colony which made it fall to an English privateer in July 1629 without striking a blow in its own defence. In short, Iroquois influence on the progress of settlement in New France during the period 1608-1629 was negligible.

After 1657 the Jesuit Relations record attacks and rumours of attacks by the Iroquois on the French settlements almost every year. Contemporary accounts are permeated by the feeling of insecurity, of the lurking, ever present danger which enveloped the St. Lawrence like a pall. But from the documents of this early period we get no such impression. The Iroquois are mentioned, indeed, but seldom, and then not in the vicinity of Quebec.(1 Despite the contentions of the Hurons and Algonkin that the enemy barred their passage down the St. Lawrence, their fur flotillas came down to the Rapids annually and Champlain does not mention one specific instance of furs lost or men massacred on the journey. If there were such incidents, they must have been too unimportant to warrant recording. One gets the impression that at this time the strife between the Iroquois and the savage allies of the French was for the most part typical desultory Indian warfare, consisting of raids by war parties, sometimes large, sometimes small. The balance seems to have been fairly even with no great damage done on either side. There are but two instances recorded of Frenchmen suffering at the hands of the Iroquois, one being the

(1 Charlevoix (op. cit. I, 157), probably following the Recollet, Le Clercq, reports the capture of Father Guillaume Poulain and a threatened attack on the Recollet convent on the River St. Charles near Quebec by the Iroquois in 1622, but neither Champlain nor Sagard mentions the incident. It does not harmonize with Champlain's account of the peace negotiations entered upon this year.

torture of the interpreter Etienne Brulé, who had fallen into the clutches of the Seneca, and the other the murder of the Frenchmen sent with the embassy to the Mohawk in 1627. Against this record is the tale of five Dutchmen slaughtered by them in 1626. Champlain, in his appeals to the king that the colony be properly fortified, had in mind not the Iroquois but the English and Dutch, now settled uncomfortably close at hand and hostile to the French.(1 The oft mooted project of a fort at the Rapids was merely for the protection of the savages as they came down to barter, and it remained a project.

All evidence at hand points to the conclusion that the Iroquois had given no indication yet of any design to wipe out the French. Had they wished to do so, New France was at this time considerably weaker than when they did make the attempt. The energy of the Mohawk, later to become the scourge of the French, was during this period largely occupied in the strife with the Mahican. They had not yet the overweening boldness which the possession of firearms was to give them a few years later. We must look elsewhere for the explanation of the slow growth of the French colony at Quebec.

This explanation is not far to seek. As indicated earlier, probably the fundamental fact is that the French are not a colonizing race. Starting under this heavy handicap, the French government employed precisely the methods which have been shown by the accumulated experience of European nations to militate against successful colonization. At different periods, different methods predominated. In the period under consideration the means employed to found a colony on the St. Lawrence was settlement by

(1 Laverdière, op. cit., V, 324.

chartered company. Let us see what measure of success it attained.

The primary need of man is food, from which comes the basic importance of agriculture in the economy of any nation. Nowadays with modern facilities for trade and swift transportation, a nation need not be dependent upon itself for its food supply. But in the days of the sailing vessel, when under favorable conditions the transatlantic voyage occupied two months, it was most important that a colony be able to produce enough food to sustain its own population and hence that agriculture be established on a solid foundation. Essential to successful agriculture is a stable, industrious population, and this is precisely what New France lacked. Why ? - because the fur trade and colonisation do not mix. As the radius of cleared land grows, fur bearing animals are driven farther and farther back and the trader's field becomes more and more distant from his base. Considering the vast forest wastes of Quebec, this could hardly be a serious menace to the trade. However, the monopolists saw in every colonist a possible interloper in the trade, who might cut into their profits, quite aside from the initial expense involved in establishing him on the land. Was it likely, then, that they would conscientiously endeavor to carry out their colonising obligations ?

"The history of all the companies formed during these years for trade in New France is the same ; first a monopoly is granted under circumstances ostensibly most favorable to the government and to the privileged merchants ; then follow the growls of the excluded traders, the lack of good voluntary colonists, the transportation to the colony of a few beggars, criminals, or unpromising labourers ; a drain on the company's funds in maintaining these during the long winter ; a steady decrease in the number taken out ; at length no attempt to fulfil this condition of

the monopoly ; the anger of the Government when made aware of the facts ; and finally the sudden repeal of the monopoly several years before the legal termination."[1] The insecurity of monopoly tenure cooled the already lukewarm zeal of the companies in carrying out these obligations. The old saw "Make hay while the sun shines." might well express the sentiments of the shareholders of the several companies formed in this early period of French enterprise in the St. Lawrence Valley. Let us examine briefly the history of the various companies which enjoyed the monopoly of trade during these years.

Monts was an exception to the general rule, since he honestly tried to carry out his obligations. His colonizing ventures in Acadia, 1604-7, by reason of poor colonizing material and unfortunate choice of a site, brought him to the brink of financial ruin and earned him, not gratitude from the government, but merely the fate of his predecessor Chauvin. His monopoly, granted for ten years, was repealed at the end of the third. Granted a monopoly for one year in 1608, he established a post at Quebec, but it was intended solely as a trading post, not a settlement, though it later became the nucleus of a French colony on the St. Lawrence. During the next five years of open trade he continued to maintain this post at considerable expense to himself, but his example was not followed by other traders.

One of the conditions on which the monopoly of 1614 was granted was that the company should take out six families each year. How was this obligation carried out ? For the first three years it seems to have been wilfully disregarded. The imprisonment of Condé in September 1616

[1 Biggar, Early Trading Companies, 49-50.

and the ensuing disputes over the office of Viceroy focussed attention on the affairs of the company and the total absence of colonists of any sort excited open comment. Monts, as the shareholder of most experience, hastily drew up a new agreement whereby the company agreed to take out the stipulated number of colonists and to support them for two years. Public interest in the matter soon cooled and with it the zeal of the company for fulfilling its obligations.

In 1617, however, Quebec's first permanent colonist, Louis Hébert, a Parisian apothecary, was brought out. The conditions which he was forced to accept were hardly calculated to induce others to follow in his footsteps. The company agreed to support him and his family for two years and to give him, in addition, one hundred crowns a year for three years. In return he was obliged to sign an agreement whereby not only himself but his wife, children and even his servant, were required to serve the company for the whole of that period. Instead of being a colonist, he was merely a servant of the company, and could clear his land and build his house only when the chief factor at Quebec had no need of his or his family's services. At the end of the three years he might grow agricultural produce, but had to sell it to the company at the prices current in France. On no account was he to engage in the fur trade, and finally he was to be continually at the service of the company in his profession of apothecary without payment.(1

In the meantime, Champlain had had a small piece of land cleared and seeded, but as soon as he sailed for France in the fall, it was neglected and when he returned every spring, he was almost certain to find everything

(1 Sagard, speaking of the Héberts, says "..... the Company treated them with the utmost rigour, thinking perhaps to discourage them from remaining and other families from coming to live there except as servants, or rather, as slaves. (Histoire, I, 52-53)

just as he had left it in the previous autumn. The inhabitants of the post were entirely dependent for their sustenance on the yearly supply ships from France. The population of Quebec was "floating", being occupied solely in the business of the trade. As Sagard complained, all the company officials thought about was the trade in beaver.(1 In 1618 Champlain not only found the factors in desperate need of food, but the factory actually falling into ruin. On his return to France in the autumn he sought to stir the company to action in the matter of colonization, but without success.

In the autumn of 1619 the office of Viceroy was sold to the Duc de Montmorency and the Sieur Dolu, as his agent, was instructed to inquire into the condition of affairs in the colony. In the course of his investigations, in which he was aided by Champlain, Dolu discovered that not only had the company disregarded its colonizing obligations, but also it had left the river absolutely unfortified, while the factory at Quebec was still dependent for food on the annual supply ships. On returning to Quebec with his wife in the summer of 1620 Champlain found the building falling into ruin. The rest of the summer was devoted to rendering the place habitable. Construction of a new fort was also begun. Probably as a result of the report which Champlain sent home this year, Dolu decided to recommend the cancellation of the company's monopoly, though it should legally have run until 1625. This fate was neither entirely unexpected nor undeserved.

The monopoly was granted to the De Caens in 1621 on similar terms. Six families of not less than three persons each were to be taken out annually. The new company's record in the matter of colonization is

(1 Sagard, Histoire, II, 165.

very similar to that of its predecessor. In 1621 two butchers and their wives who had been brought out as colonists by the old company in the previous summer were sent back to France, having done nothing to justify their continued presence in the colony. With them returned the Recollet, Father George le Baillif, commissioned to lay before the king a petition of the inhabitants, complaining of the negligence of the company and begging him to erect and garrison a fort. Contraband trade in guns by the interloping La Rochelle traders was a standing threat to the safety of the settlement.

In 1622 the colony at Quebec numbered only fifty persons, including women and children.(1 In the following year construction of a new and larger habitation was undertaken. In 1624 Champlain returned to France highly dissatisfied with the company's neglect of the welfare of the settlement and its treatment of himself. The supplies sent out for the sustenance of the inhabitants were barely sufficient for one year. No attention was given to agriculture because the company refused to provide the necessary tools and seed. Only the family of Hébert cultivated a small plot of land. "The old Companies, in the more than twenty years during which they had possessed the country, had not sowed an arpent of land."(2 The colony was not even allowed to drag out its miserable existence in peace. Religious differences embittered its life. The Caens, who were Huguenots, allowed sailors of the same religous persuasion to indulge in their own services, and strains of heretical psalmody floated ashore from the sloops anchored in the harbor to outrage Catholic ears.

Champlain, returning to New France in 1625 after a year's absence, found everything in complete disorder. The factory which he had left almost

(1 Charlevoix, Op. cit., I, 158.
(2 Sagard, Histoire, I, 164.

completed had not been finished, though the materials were available. No one, save the Héberts and the Récollet Fathers had paid any attention to the cultivation of the soil, and the colonists were subsisting on roots and berries. Under Champlain's vigorous direction the factory was completed; the little fort at the foot of the cliff which had been built in 1620 was torn down and a larger one built on the same foundation. The cattle were taken to the rich meadows at Cap Tourmente and huts were constructed to shelter them and the cowherd and his family. The twenty workers who had been sent out to the Jesuits this year were hard at work constructing a college-residence for the Fathers. Outwardly the colony seemed to have taken on a new lease of life. Actually its condition was far from satisfactory.

The preamble to the Articles granted to the Company of New France relates the Caens' sins of omission in some detail and gives a fairly comprehensive picture of the state of New France twenty years after the founding of Quebec. One habitation only had been constructed under the regimes of the successive companies to shelter the forty or fifty French who were there in the interests of the merchants rather than in the service of the king. The inhabitants were still dependent on France for food. Immigration had been discouraged, not fostered.(1 In the winter of 1627 there were fifty-five souls in the little post at Quebec(2, not including the missionaries or their domestics. A few adventurous spirits were away in the woods with the Indians, but all told, the French in Canada numbered less than one hundred. A comparison of New France with the English colony of Virginia, which had been founded a year earlier (1607), reveals the full extent of the failure of French colonial policy, and this failure, we emphasise again, can

(1 Collection de Manuscrits, Tome I (Quebec, 1855), 62-65.
(2 Laverdière, op. cit., VI, 146.

in no way be attributed to Iroquois hostility at this early date. "By 1622," says John Fiske, "the population of Virginia was at least four thousand, the tobacco fields were flourishing and lucrative, durable houses had been built and made comfortable with furniture brought from England, and the old squalor was everywhere giving way to thrift. The area of colonization was pushed up the James River as far as Richmond."(1 Such a comparison is perhaps hardly fair, since the climate of New France was much more rigorous than that of Virginia and the progress of agriculture must necessarily have been slower. But even allowing for this, the French record shows that something was amiss.

It was fortunate for New France that the breach of peace found the Iroquois otherwise occupied since the colony, besides being weak numerically, was poorly provisioned. The Company's vessel with the greater part of the supplies had failed to arrive ; a similar fate had befallen the supply ship of the Jesuits, who were forced to send home their workmen in the autumn of 1628. There was no local source of supply, owing to the Company's discouragement of agriculture. In addition, the defensive armament was very weak ; there were cannon and muskets but scarcely any shot or powder. As events were soon to prove, the colony was at the mercy of any hostile trader.

Unknown as yet to Champlain at Quebec, who was anxiously counting the days until the arrival of the supply ships in the spring, things were happening in France which seemed to augur well for the future of the tiny outpost on the St. Lawrence. The attention of the Cardinal-Minister Richelieu, who now ruled France and her weak-willed king, had been directed to New France. The negligence of the Caens was patent and the withdrawal of their monopoly before its legal termination could hardly be regarded as unjustified. The office of Viceroy was abolished and New France was brought

(1 Quoted in C. W. Colby, Samuel de Champlain, The Founder of New France. (Chronicles of Canada, Vol. III, Toronto, 1915), pp. 81-82.

directly under the control of the Cardinal as Grand Master of Navigation and Commerce. Unfortunately, the genius of Richelieu did not extend to commerce and colonisation. After the experience of the past twenty-five years it seems inconceivable that the experiment of colonisation by chartered company should have been tried again. Yet tried it was on an even larger scale ; the results were to prove scarcely more encouraging.

Under the aegis of Richelieu was formed the Company of New France, incorrectly known as the Company of One Hundred Associates, whose shareholders included many individuals prominent at court and in the government and which had an initial capital of 300,000 livres. To this Company was given not only a monopoly of the trade for fifteen years, but the whole of the St. Lawrence Valley in full ownership. In return the Company agreed to take out annually three hundred colonists, or some four thousand in all by the year 1643, and to support in each settlement three priests until the community was able to undertake this charge. Another stipulation for which the zealous Cardinal was responsible was that none but French Catholics might be taken out as colonists and thus the scales were still further tipped against the struggling colony on the St. Lawrence. The only class of Frenchmen with a strong motive for emigrating, a motive, furthermore, which was to become not weaker but stronger in succeeding years, was thereby debarred from a haven across the sea. In trying to estimate the influence of the Iroquois on settlement in later years, such factors must be taken into account.

For the present, however, the outlook for New France seemed rosy. In April 1628 four ships under the command of Claude de Roquemont left Dieppe for New France, bearing about two hundred settlers and supplies. Unfortunately they never reached their destination. In the Gulf of St. Lawrence they were intercepted by the English privateer, David Kirke, who

was acting under letters of marque issued by the king of England in reprisal for the seizure of the English wine fleet at Bordeaux. News of the disaster was brought by friendly Indians to the little company at Quebec and its harassed commander, who had recently returned a fearless negative to Kirke's order of surrender. Instead of the promised relief there were eleven more men, the crew of a shallop sent in advance by Roquemont to give notice of his approach, to share the rapidly dwindling stores. Some fifteen or twenty men were sent back to winter with the Hurons who had come down to trade as usual. Even so, the inmates of the fort were reduced to seven ounces of dried peas daily per person. At the end of May these failed and men, women and children were forced to grub for roots and gather acorns. Champlain had contemplated the desperate step of taking the able bodied men to the Iroquois country, seizing one of their villages, and sustaining himself and his followers there for the rest of the winter on the stores of maize. That he could even have harbored this idea, which involved leaving Quebec defenceless, seems sufficient reason for presuming that the Iroquois were not yet considered to be a serious menace to the settlement. For the pitiful state to which the colony was reduced in July 1629, the government of France was partly to blame, while a large share of responsibility must be borne by the successive companies which had systematically neglected their colonizing obligations and refused to the few settlers whom they had brought out even the means of producing their food supply.

On July 20, 1629, Quebec capitulated to Lewis Kirke, having been literally starved into submission. For the next three years the cross of St. George replaced the fleur-de-lys on the banks of the St. Lawrence. The greater part of the French inhabitants were carried back to England in the ships of their captor and finally to France. Thirty-one, including the

widow Hebert and her family, remained under the English occupation, living for the day when their compatriots would return.[1] Back in France Champlain devoted all his energies to speeding up the slow moving diplomatic machine, which primarily through his urgent appeal had been set in motion for the restoration of New France to the Most Christian King.

Missions 1608-1629

If the hostility of the Iroquois exerted no discernible influence on the progress of settlement during the years 1608-29, it was a very important factor in determining the direction which French missionary effort should take. Champlain's expeditions against the Iroquois effectually excluded French missionaries from this field. Had they been able to gain a foothold among the Five Nations before ties of self interest had bound them to the Dutch and before Dutch guns had made them so formidable, the history of New France might have been very different. As matters stood, French Catholicism was forced to seek its converts among the Hurons and roving Algonkin tribes of the St. Lawrence, people destined to be broken and scattered by the Iroquois before half a century had passed. During this early period, however, this could not be foreseen, and apart from determining the fields in which French missionaries should work, the Iroquois had little influence on missions at this time. The slow progress made during the first fifteen years of missionary effort may be ascribed to lack of funds, the difficulties encountered in acquiring a working knowledge of the Huron and Algonkin tongues, and the indifference, if not hostility, of the natives to the Faith, rather than to Iroquois

(1 B. Sulte. Histoire des Canadiens Francais, 1608-1880. (Montreal, 1882) I, 57.

interference.

At the time of his first contact with the Laurentian Algonkin in 1603 Champlain had displayed a lively interest in their religious beliefs. A man of great piety, one of his most ardent desires was to see the True Faith preached among these people, who lived "like brute beasts." But for seven years after the founding of Quebec his wish was not to be granted. The Jesuits, indeed, had labored in Acadia from 1611 to 1613, but it was not until June 25, 1615, that mass was celebrated at Quebec. While visiting in France in the winter of 1614-15, Champlain communicated his desire to the Sieur Houel, Superintendent of the Salt Works at Brouage, who appealed to the neighboring community of Récollets. The latter responded with ardor and alacrity and it was arranged that several of their number should sail with Champlain to the St. Lawrence in the following summer. So it was that on April 24, 1615, three grey-robed Récollet friars, Denis Jamay, Jean Dolbeau and Joseph Le Caron and a lay brother Pacifique du Plessis embarked at Honfleur for Canada to found the first permanent mission among the Indians of New France.

It was a tremendous task which confronted these four pioneers of the Cross on their arrival at Quebec in June. Quite apart from the magnitude of the field, for which their numbers were totally inadequate, they knew no word of Algonkin or Huron and before real missionary work could begin, they had to acquire a working knowledge of these tongues. The first step was obviously a division of the field of labor. Jamay and du Plessis were to remain at Quebec, Dolbeau was to return to Tadoussac and essay the thorny task of ministering to the tribes in that vicinity, while to Le Caron was assigned the distant but more promising field of

Huronia.

The results of the mission among the roving Algonkin were most disheartening. The difficulties of the language, the almost insufferable hardships of life among these nomads, their vice and indifference to the faith weighed heavily upon the spirits of the Fathers. They soon came to the conclusion that before much headway could be made with these heathen they must be rendered sedentary, must be induced to settle near the trading posts in order that they might be more easily reached. A plan so opposed to the interests of the fur trade the Company would not countenance and the Recollets, a mendicant order, had neither the funds nor the power to essay the task unaided.

In Huronia the path of the friar was thorny and beset with difficulties. Le Caron had been warmly received by the Hurons and had had the supreme bliss of saying the first mass among them on August 12, 1615. During part of the winter of 1615-16 he had had the companionship of Champlain and together they had visited the Tobacco Nation, where the friar was badly received, owing to the influence of the medicine men who saw in him a rival. But he found the Huron tongue difficult, and the field of labor entirely too large and hence returned to Quebec with Champlain in the spring of 1616. Thence he took ship for France to solicit aid from the Company for the missions, returning to the colony a year later with nothing but its good wishes.

It was seven years before the Huron mission was resumed. Then, in August 1623, Le Caron returned to the scene of his former labors, accompanied by Father Viel and the lay brother Gabriel Sagard. The only fruits of the mission were a few baptisms and a dictionary of the Huron language, compiled by Sagard with Le Caron's assistance. In June 1624

these two accompanied the annual canoe fleet to Quebec and Viel was left alone in Huronia. Returning to Quebec in the early summer of 1625, he was drowned near Montreal in the rapid known thereafter as the "Sault au Récollet" under circumstances that hinted at foul play.

Great as were the difficulties of life among the savages, greater still were the trials which the Récollets had to bear in the form of the opposition of the Company of St. Malo and Rouen to their work. Many of the traders were Huguenots and viewed with hostility the spread of the Catholic religion and put every obstacel in the way of the friars. Trained interpreters in the employ of the Company were ordered not to assist the missionaries in acquiring a knowledge of the native languages. The design of the Fathers to render the savages sedentary was bitterly opposed. The Company had agreed to support six missionaries, and though it carried out this obligation, it did so with a niggardly and grudging hand. At length in 1621 Father George Le Baillif was sent to France to lay the complaints of the colony and of the missionaries before the king. The charter of the Company was revoked and the monopoly given to William and Emery de Caen. But as these men were Huguenots, the unhappy state of affairs continued in a more aggravated form. Discouraged, the Fathers decided to send two of their number to invite the co-operation of the militant and powerful Society of Jesus.

The Récollet appeal arrived most opportunely. Early in 1625 the office of Viceroy was taken over by the Duc de Ventadour, a prince who was more interested in the coversion of the savages than in the secular affairs of the colony. It was at his expense that the first three Jesuit Fathers to enter the St. Lawrence, Charles Lalemant, Enémond Massé, and

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de Brébeuf, and two lay brothers of the Society were sent in 1625 to aid the Récollets in the tremendous task of carrying the Cross into the forests of Quebec and the populous villages of Huronia. The aggressive Jesuits were even less acceptable to the Huguenot traders than the humble Récollets and the welcome which the black-robed priests received at Quebec was frigid. A slanderous pamphlet directed against their Order had been distributed among the inhabitants of the post and they found all doors closed against them, save those of the hospitable Récollets. It was in the Récollet convent on the little River St. Charles that the Jesuits took up residence until a house was built for them in the following year.

Scarcely had the Jesuits made themselves at home in the convent of the Récollets when they began making plans for the mission. It was decided that Lalemant and Massé should remain at Quebec, while Brébeuf went to the Hurons. Accompanied by the Récollet, La Roche Daillon, he set out almost immediately for Cape Victory where the barter was being held this year. Less eager for martyrdom than he afterwards proved, he abandoned the plan for that year when news was brought of the fate of Father Viel, and for a year Huronia remained without a missionary. During the winter of 1625-6 the Jesuits, with the exception of Brébeuf, remained at the convent of the Récollets. He joined a party of Montagnais hunters and journeyed with them to their hunting grounds. Returning to Quebec in the spring, his eyes once more turned to Huronia.

Towards the end of July, just when preparations were being made to break ground for the residence of Notre-Dame-des-Anges, Brébeuf set out with the Hurons on the long journey to the shores of Georgian Bay. With him went Father Anne de Noue and the Récollet La Roche Daillon. Some difficulty had been experienced in persuading the Hurons to accept the Jesuits

as passengers. Knowing the "grey-robes" they readily consented to take Father Daillon, but it was only by dint of liberal presents that they agreed to take the strange "black-robes". The course of the travellers lay over the route which Le Caron had followed eleven years before and proved fully as arduous to the Frenchmen. Arriving in the Huron country, the three Fathers established themselves in Viel's cabin at Toanché which for three years remained the headquarters of the mission.

In October 1626, acting upon instructions from his Superior, Le Caron, Daillon visited the country of the Neutrals, a powerful and populous Iroquoian nation whose territory lay five or six days journey south in the Niagara peninsula, a land rich in beaver. The Father was at first well received by the Neutrals and invited them to come to trade with the French and make an alliance with them.(1 The Hurons learnt of this and fearing that they might lose their profitable position as middlemen in the trade between the Neutrals and the French, sent messengers denouncing the grey-robe as a sorcerer who had come to destroy them with disease and death. These calumnies found ready acceptance among the superstitious natives. Spurned where before he had been welcomed, robbed, and threatened with death, Daillon returned to Toanché, barely escaping with his life. For a year longer he remained there with Brébeuf before following Noue back to the settlement. The latter, finding himself totally unable to learn even the rudiments of the Huron tongue and not wishing to be a burden to Brébeuf, had returned to Quebec in 1627.

After Daillon's departure Brébeuf was left to carry on the work of the Huron mission alone. The Hurons welcomed him as a friend, but were for the most part indifferent to the message he brought, and he made few converts.

(1 Sagard, Histoire, IV, 80.

However, he made considerable progress in learning the language, an accomplishment which was to stand the mission in good stead in later years. His one desire now was to live and die among these people, but knowing from the reports of the French sent back to winter with the Hurons the deplorable condition of the colony at Quebec, he was not surprised when, early in the summer of 1629, he received a message requesting his presence there. His departure, lamented by Christian and pagan alike, brought the Huron mission temporarily to a close. He arrived at Quebec just in time to witness its surrender to the Kirkes. Five years were to pass before he returned to resume his interrupted labors in his chosen field of Huronia.

During the first fifteen years of missionary effort in New France little progress had been made in the gigantic task of bringing the savage hordes to a knowledge and acceptance of the Christian faith. That such was the case cannot be attributed to lack of zeal on the part of the missionaries. Still less can it be ascribed to the hostility of the Iroquois. The first missionaries did not arrive until 1615 and after that date the Mohawk, occupied in the strife with the Mahicans, seem to have left the Laurentian Algonkin in comparative peace. The Upper Nations continued their inroads on the Hurons, but the warfare took the form of occasional raids, which the Hurons returned in full measure, and made little impression on the nation, then at the height of its power. Though peace was concluded with the Iroquois in 1622 and lasted five years, there was no attempt to carry the Cross into their villages. Why was this opportunity let slip ? In the answer to this question will be found the key to the slow progress of the Faith in New France during the first twenty years of its existence.

Perhaps one reason for the failure of the missionaries to take advantage of the peace of 1622 to attempt the conversion of the Iroquois was the

opposition of the merchants. Sagard contended that they frowned upon his desire to bring about peace between the Hurons and Iroquois lest the trade of the former be diverted down the Hudson.(1 A more likely explanation, however, is the lack of missionaries. The traders apparently had not fully grasped the idea that the trade would find in the missions its surest ally, and the support which they gave to the Recollets was niggardly and grudging. Many of them, Huguenots, were opposed on principle to the spread of Catholicism among the heathen tribes of New France. More potent, probably, than any conscientious objections, was their fear of the Récollet design to render the roving Algonkin sedentary. The Récollet friars, a mendicant order, were quite as dependent upon the Company for support as were the colonists. How the successive companies carried out their obligations to the colony has already been demonstrated. They were no more lavish in their support of the missions, and as long as these were dependent entirely on the trading companies for financial support, they could be expected to make little progress. In 1625 the Récollets called to their assistance the powerful and wealthy order of Loyola, but the Jesuits had scarcely become established before the English arrived to put an end to all missionary projects for the time being.

Apart from the scarcity of workers for the vast mission field, the early missionaries labored under the necessity of acquiring a knowledge of native tongues. The difficulties of this task were increased by the absence of any form of written expression among the savages and by the refusal of the interpreters to assist them.

That the causes for the slow progress of missions during the period 1608-1629 are not to be sought in the activities of the Iroquois will be amply demonstrated when we consider the history of the missions during the years 1632-45. In this time of adversity, marked by famine, disease and

(1 Sagard. Histoire. IV. 811.

almost incessant war, the Faith flourished as it had never done in earlier, more prosperous days before the plague raised its head and before the Iroquois had begun to be a serious threat to life and security.

CHAPTER III

New France under the "Great Company" 1632-1645

The significance for New France of the expulsion of the Mahican from the Hudson region was manifested almost immediately after the restoration of the colony to the French crown. With the Mahican menace removed, the Mohawk were now free to transfer their activities to the St. Lawrence region and they proceeded to do so with devastating effect, heightened by their possession of firearms with which the Dutch began to supply them during the 'thirties. While the Upper Iroquois continued to harry the Hurons, the Mohawk infested the trade routes, disrupted French communications with the west, and harassed the French and their Algonkin allies. The first effects of the resurgence of Mohawk aggressiveness appeared in the diminished volume of trade from the west and steadily dwindling profits. By 1645 the baneful influence of Iroquois warfare had reached such proportions that control of the fur trade was transferred to a few of the leading habitants of the colony. On settlement the influence of the Iroquois is more difficult to determine. Though abandoned by the home government and by the Company, the little colony continued to grow, largely through the efforts of private individuals and religious foundations, but was too weak to do more than remain on the defensive against the Iroquois and quite unable to aid the Algonkin and Hurons, among whom devastating plagues had come to heighten the horrors of war. The Jesuits saw their flocks decimated by disease and the Iroquois, but found some consolation in the fact that the savages, indifferent to the Faith in times of prosperity, were turning to it in the midst of adversity.

The Fur Trade 1632-1645

On Monday, July 5, 1632, Emery de Caen anchored before Quebec with credentials empowering him to take over the country from the English in the name of the King of France. The restoration of New France had scarcely been in doubt, since Quebec had been taken after the conclusion of peace between France and England by the Convention of Suza, whereby it had been agreed that any captures made two months after the signing of the treaty should be restored by both parties. However, more controversial points remained to be settled, and these and the exigencies of European and French domestic politics dragged out negotiations for more than two years. It was not until March, 1632, that the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye was signed restoring Acadia and Quebec to France.

To reimburse it for losses sustained during the war, the United Company of the Caens was given a monopoly of trade for the year 1632, after which period the Company of New France was to take over the country. The French ships arriving at Tadoussac in June 1632 found, as Champlain had done twenty-nine years earlier, the savages celebrating a victory over the Iroquois. Nine prisoners had been taken, but news of peace negotiations with the Iroquois spared their lives for a time.(1 Prospects of peace vanished, however, with the slaying of one of the prisoners on the order of his custodian, who was drunk with English brandy. On such relatively trivial incidents did Indian decisions on war and peace turn ; small wonder, then, that the efforts of Champlain and his successors failed to establish a lasting peace between

(1 Hewit Relations, V, 27.

these passionate and wayward children of the forest.

Under the terms of the treaty, the trade this year was open to vessels of both nations. It is doubtful, therefore, if Caen's profits were large. Only fifty canoes of Hurons came down to trade, since the English, though much less astute in trading than the French, were less tolerant of Indian vagaries and had alienated many of the natives by their brusque manners. The bartering was marked by considerable disorder. Liquor traffic had been introduced by the English, so the French alleged, and drunken orgies were common.

After the end of the trading season, the Caens relinquished their monopoly, receiving 79,000 livres in compensation for the revocation of the charter, granted to them in 1621, before its legal termination. In the spring of 1655, then, the Company of New France entered into full possession of the country whose political and commercial destinies it was to control for the next thirty years. Losses occasioned by the capture of its fleets in 1628 and 1629 had consumed nearly 270,000 of the total capital of 300,000 livres and had left the Company in a serious financial position. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising to find that very early in its career the affairs of the Company were placed in the hands of a small inner group whose members had already engaged in the trade at Dieppe, Rouen and Paris and were familiar with its problems. Lauson, later Governor of New France, was the general supervisor or intendant of the Company, while Champlain was made Governor of New France. Under this Company, as under its predecessors, the fur trade remained the dominant interest and everything was subordinated to the consuming passion for gain. Unlike its predecessors, however, the

Company had to contend with Iroquois hostility as a serious factor in the trade.

The year of the Company's resumption of control over New France marked the beginning of a new and more destructive phase of Iroquois warfare, which for the next thirty years was to be almost unremitting. The Mohawk, with the Mahican menace removed and the Richelieu waterway open, transferred their activities to the St. Lawrence valley. Their marauding war parties rendered the route unsafe for the Hurons and Algonkin, particularly in the region of Lake St. Peter. In June 1655 the changed complexion of affairs was made very evident to the French, when thirty or forty Mohawk fell upon a party of sailors who were towing a shallop upstream, and killed two.(1 The boat had been sent by Champlain to protect a party of Hurons coming down to trade.

However, Iroquois activity did not seriously affect the trade for a few years yet. These redoubtable warriors were neither so brave nor so foolhardy as to forget that discretion is the better part of valor, and they attacked only when they equalled or outnumbered their prospective victims.(2 Consequently, while a few canoes had a slim chance of reaching the trading posts unscathed, large flotillas were able to make the journey with little danger. Thus, in July 1655, one hundred and forty canoes of Hurons, carrying at least five hundred men with their merchandise, arrived safely. The only opposition which they had encountered was from the Algonkin of Allumette Island who tried to bar their passage, resenting Huron usurpation of the profitable middle-

(1 Apparently they had not yet secured firearms from the Dutch, since they showed fear of the arquebus and fled when a Frenchman pointed one at them. (Jesuit Relations, V, 215)

(2 Ibid., XXXII, 19.

man's position which they had formerly enjoyed.[1

In the following year (1654) Champlain undertook the construction of a fort at Three Rivers, which had for some time been a trading rendezvous. It was designed to protect the Indian allies of the French from Iroquois attacks and its garrison might be used, if necessary, to patrol the river. This year fewer Hurons came down and only in small bands, as a result of a severe defeat at the hands of the Seneca which had cost them two hundred dead and one hundred prisoners.[2 This blow was merely the prelude to an almost uninterrupted succession of others.

About this time the Iroquois seem to have embarked upon a systematic war of attrition against the Hurons. Still fearing the combination of Hurons and French, of whom there were now several in the Huron country, in addition to the missionaries, they resorted to strategy which took the form of keeping up the pretence of peace with the main body, while on various pretexts they attacked outlying villages, gradually wearing down the strength of the Hurons, undermining their morale, and forcing them to draw in their southern frontiers. In this plan of campaign, the Iroquois confederacy was a valuable asset. The four upper nations, particularly the Seneca, bore the brunt of the operations against the Hurons, while their eastern flank was protected by the Mohawk who were able to keep the French and Algonkin occupied.

The Hurons, on the other hand, no longer derived strength from the French alliance, while the demands of the fur trade rendered them more vulnerable than heretofore. Their dependence upon French manufactured

(1 Jesuit Relations, VI, 19.
(2 Ibid., VII, 213-14.

goods was now almost complete, since primitive arts of manufacture had been allowed to fall into disuse after the superiority of French kettles, knives, hatchets, and other necessities of Indian life had been demonstrated. To secure these they must have furs, and even at this early date the beaver in the Huron country had been exterminated by improvident hunting methods which wiped out whole colonies.(1 Increasing emphasis had to be placed on intertribal trade with the hunting Indians of the north and northwest. More and more warriors were occupied in this traffic, which took them away from home during the summer months, the favorite season for Iroquois raids, and left their villages in a weakened state of defence. Furthermore, the presence of French missionaries in their country seemed to promise French aid against their enemies and in the expectation of this they abandoned themselves to a fatal confidence which was one of the major causes of their ruin. Owing to the misguided policy of the government in the matter of colonization and the failure of the Company of New France to carry out its obligations, the successive governors of New France had their hands full trying to protect the French settlers from the Iroquois scalping knife. While they fully appreciated the importance of the Hurons and their allies to the fur trade, they were powerless to aid them.

By 1655 the Iroquois had become a serious menace. They infested the trade routes; their name inspired terror in the tribes for four hundred leagues around.(2 Yet the situation was far from hopeless and prompt, decisive action at this time might well have deflected the fate which now hung heavy over the Hurons, and have saved New France from untold

(1 Jesuit Relations, VII, 57.
(2 Laverdière, VI (Appendix) Pièces Justificatives, p. 56.

suffering and loss in blood and treasure. Champlain, no mean judge of the situation, was confident that one hundred and twenty men, lightly armed, and reinforced by two or three thousand of the savage allies of the French, would be sufficient to subdue the Iroquois and bring them within the orbit of French influence. This accomplished, the possibilities for missionary effort and for the trade were enormous.(1 Such was the substance of the appeal which he sent to the Cardinal a few months before his death. But it remained unanswered. Richelieu was too engrossed in his self-appointed task of humbling the power of the Hapsburg in Europe to heed the pleas of the governor of the remote colony on the St. Lawrence, a colony, moreover, whose future he thought he had settled by the arrangements of 1628. On Christmas Day, 1635, the "Founder of New France" breathed his last. The loss to the colony and to the savage allies of the French was one which was not easily made good. New France and the Company were entering on a future beset with peril and without the benefit of his unrivalled experience and consummate tact in the handling of the natives and his unflagging energy in promoting the cause of the colony at home.

In June 1636 Quebec welcomed Champlain's successor, the Chevalier de Montmagny, who had been in charge of the affairs of the Company in France since 1632. He was a man of great personal courage, executive ability, good judgment and profound piety. For ten strenuous years he was to essay the thankless task of governing New France in the face of Company neglect and incessant Iroquois alarms, and under the circumstances his record is highly creditable.

(1 Laverdière, VI (Appendix) Pièces Justificatives, p. 56.

In 1656, despite rumours of war among nations on the Huron trade route, spread, it was believed by the Iroquois in the hope of diverting Huron trade from the French, the Hurons came down as usual. Again the Algonkin of the Isle tried to stop them, but let them pass after payment of a substantial toll. In the following summer five hundred Iroquois encamped on the north shore of Lake St. Peter to ambush the Huron fur fleet. The Lake swarmed with the enemy who held all the avenues to the French. When Montmagny gave chase with two well armed shallops they retired to the Richelieu River, but not before they had captured thirty Hurons with all their peltry.(1

In the Relations of 1658 and 1659 the Huron mission was the subject of all absorbing interest and we look in vain for references to Iroquois activity on the river. It appears, however, that it continued unabated, large parties being sent at intervals during the summer to lie in wait for the Huron and Algonkin traders.(2 In 1640 Lalemant warned that "we must at least expect soon to see their trade with our French entirely broken off - for the enemy become every year stronger and more formidable upon the river."(5 From this time on, the warnings became more vehement, the pleas for aid more urgent, as the toll of men massacred and canoes pillaged mounted higher and higher.

Quite apart from the ancient grudge they bore the Algonkin and their Huron allies, the Iroquois, and particularly the Mohawk, now had an economic motive for their depredations. Some time during the decade

(1 Jesuit Relations, XII, 209.
(2 Ibid., XXIV, 271-5.
(5 Ibid., XXII, 225.

1639-40 the Dutch began selling firearms to the Mohawk, and though an ordinance issued in 1658 prohibited this traffic, there was much contraband trading by private individuals. The Mohawk country was comparatively small and the supply of beaver limited, black squirrel being their most valuable fur.(1 The highly prized guns could only be secured in trade for furs. The richest fur-bearing country lay north of the St. Lawrence in the forest-covered Precambrian region which stretched over the present Quebec and northern Ontario, but the Hurons and Algonkin between them controlled the output of this area. However, if they could be eliminated, the Iroquois would enjoy the advantages of the middleman, a position for which their agricultural economy, military power and strategic position with respect to the Dutch settlements admirably fitted them. The more beaver skins they could collect, the more guns they might purchase ; the greater their store of firearms, the greater their offensive power and the more likely the success of their ambitious plans of conquest. Trade and war were thus complementary.

There was, however, division in the camp of the Five Nations. The Upper Nations (Seneca, Onondaga, Cayuga and Oneida) had not so much to gain, economically, from the destruction of the Hurons, Algonkin and French. Not only did the Dutch at this time refuse to supply them with guns, but the Mohawk, through whose territory they had to pass to reach the Dutch trading posts, levied a toll for this privilege. They might and did enter into the fight against the Hurons and Algonkin with zest, but peace with the French was more to their advantage than war, since

(1 Charlevoix, op. cit. Tome I, 275.

them they might trade with them freely by way of the St. Lawrence, a road to which all had easy access. There were times when this fundamental clash of interests strained loyalty to the League almost to the breaking point. We shall find on several occasions the Upper Nations throwing their weight in favor of peace with the French, and though these occasions were few and short-lived and had little influence on the general course of the struggle, they did give the French a sorely needed breathing space in which to rally their forces for the resumption of hostilities.

The French were slow to follow the example of the Dutch and arm their allies with guns, since it had always been a cardinal point of their Indian policy to prohibit traffic in firearms with the natives, probably partly to make their dependence on them more complete, and partly through fear of Indian treachery. In his Relation of 1640-41 Vimont mentions as an unusual incident the presentation of an arquebus to a Huron convert, saying "these arms are wholly new to them."(1 The conduct of the French, when the possession of firearms in large numbers had made the Iroquois almost invincible against the primitively armed Hurons and Algonkin, is difficult to explain.(2 The most likely explanation would seem to be that by the time the Company officials grasped the full implications of the changed situation, the trade had almost disappeared and funds were not available.

(1 Jesuit Relations, 221.

(2 Lalemant (Ibid., XXII, 307) declares that " a single discharge of fifty or sixty arquebuses would be sufficient to cause terror to a thousand Hurons who might be going down in company and make them the prey of a hostile army lying in wait for them as they pass."

Quite apart from their possession of firearms, the Iroquois had a further advantage in that the Hurons and Algonkin coming down to trade were not equipped for war.[1] Burdened with their furs and forced to make numerous portages[2] which increased the opportunities for ambush, they were at a complete disadvantage, save for their possession of the birchbark canoe, which was much lighter and swifter than the Iroquois craft of elm bark.[3] With this brief digression, let us return now to our narrative and the events of 1641.

Late in the autumn of 1640 ninety Iroquois were scattered in the hunting places frequented by the savage allies of the French. Thirty of them carried off their prey above Montreal. The others came to prowl around Three Rivers, capturing two Frenchmen engaged in hunting.[4] In the following April five hundred of them set out with the two prisoners for Three Rivers, some of the Upper Nations, not wishing to irritate the French, having persuaded the others in council to negotiate peace. At the beginning of June some three hundred and fifty warriors were prowling along the river in sight of the fort. One of the French captives, Marguerie, was made the bearer of the Iroquois terms to Governor Champflour at Three Rivers. The Five Nations wished to make peace with the French, but had determined to "exterminate entirely" their Indian allies. Marguerie reported that

(1 Jesuit Relations XXII, 307.

(2 Brebeuf (Ibid., VIII, 77) wrote that on the Ottawa route they were obliged to carry their canoes thirty-five times and drag them over fifty.

(3 On June 27, 1657, news was brought of a battle between a party of Algonkin and Iroquois on the water. "As the Algonkin canoes are lighter than those of the Hirequois and as besides they exceeded them in number, they carried off the victory." (Ibid., XII, 181).

(4 Ibid., XXI, 25.

> "They have thirty-six arquebusiers as skillful as the French... they are abundantly furnished with powder, with lead, with bows, arrows and javelins, and with provisions. They are hoping that a present will be given them of thirty good arquebuses; they are a resolute people, whom you must trust only with reserve, since an Algonkin woman - who has lived for some time in their country and from whom these Barbarisms concealed little, - warned us in secret that these people wished to use our bodies as a bait, in order that they might take all the savages, our confederates, ruin the whole country and make themselves absolute masters of the great River."(1

The truth of this revelation seemed to be amply demonstrated by what followed. While negotiations were proceeding under the direction of Montmagny, the Iroquois held all the avenues of egress from Lake St. Peter and captured any hapless Algonkin who came their way. Four canoes were plundered and the occupants carried off almost under the Governor's very eyes. Convinced that "fear of French arms made them desire peace with us in order that they might be able to massacre with more liberty, even before our eyes, the tribes which are our confederates", Montmagny replied to their overtures with suitable presents, but no arquebuses, and insisted that the peace must include the savage allies of the French. Otherwise the trade with the Hurons and Algonkin would be entirely stopped and those nations would turn against the French.(2 While he was awaiting their reply, seven more Algonkin canoes were plundered. Finally, perceiving that the Governor had seen through their stratagem, the Iroquois threw off the mask and allowed their insolence full rein. Montmagny ordered the artillery of the barque and shallops which he had brought down from Quebec to be directed against their encampment, but they escaped unscathed under cover of darkness to a second and stronger fort

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXI, 57.

(2 Ibid., XXI, 57. "..... from this very moment, the trade is going to be ruined unless the inroads of these Barbarians be prevented."

that they had constructed deep in the woods. One band was lying in wait for the Huron fur fleet, and the Jesuit, Brebeuf, who accompanied it, narrowly escaped capture. Since the Iroquois were in command of the route to the Huron country, it was decided to provide an escort of soldiers and native Christians for the Hurons on their return journey, but the necessity for this disappeared when news was brought that the enemy had retired.

In this same year Father Le Jeune returned to France in quest of aid against an enemy who became more daring and more menacing every year.(1 When the issue was presented to the Cardinal through the medium of the Duchess d'Aiguillon, his niece, Richelieu provided 10,000 ecus with which "to send men over there to fortify against the Iroquois and prevent their incursions."(2 With the limited means at his disposal, Montmagny decided to build a fort at the mouth of the Richelieu, the main route by which the Mohawk descended to the St. Lawrence. On August 15, 1642, he arrived at the site of the proposed fort. Seven days after the work had been commenced three hundred Iroquois attacked the workmen but were beaten off with loss. This reverse checked them momentarily and prevented them from following out their plan of ambushing the Hurons and Algonkin on the River. The fort, named in honor of the Cardinal, failed to provide the hoped-for security. In the following year the Governor found, two leagues above the post, a newly made road through the woods whereby the resourceful Iroquois, bearing their canoes and baggage on their shoulders, could cut off a point of land and avoid the

(1 "They block all the roads leading to our great River, they impede the trade of the Gentlemen of the Company and threaten to ruin the whole country." (Jesuit Relations, XXII, 55)

(2 Ibid., XXI, 269.

fort.[1]

Meanwhile, throughout the winter of 1641-42 and the following spring and summer the Iroquois were almost continually in the field, harassing Hurons, Algonkin and French alike. The day before the Governor's arrival at the mouth of the Richelieu, Father Jogues with two French companions and twenty-three Hurons had fallen into an Iroquois ambush between Quebec and Three Rivers. With them were lost the supplies which they were taking to the Huron mission. About the same time eleven Huron canoes going down to Three Rivers loaded with men and furs stopped to hunt on an island about fifty leagues above Montreal and there were set upon by an Iroquois raiding party. Some of them escaped and dividing into two bands, one continued down to Three Rivers while the other turned back to give warning that the road was beset in various places. The bitterest pill which the French had to swallow was that the Iroquois enjoyed a crushing advantage over their savage allies by virtue of their possession of firearms obtained from the Dutch. In this year Montmagny complained to the Governor of New Netherland who made an amicable but non-committal reply and took no steps to curb the traffic.[2]

In the following year (1643) the Iroquois changed their tactics.

> "Formerly they came in rather large bands at certain times in the summer and afterward left the River free; but this present year they have changed their plan, and have separated themselves into bands of twenty, thirty, fifty, or a hundred at the most, along the passages and places of the River; and when one band goes away, another succeeds it. They are merely small troops, well armed, which set out incessantly, one after the other, from the country of the Iroquois, in order to occupy the whole great River and to lay ambushes along it everywhere; from these they issue unexpectedly, and fall indifferently upon the Montagnais, Algonkin, Hurons and French."[3]

[1] Jesuit Relations, XXIV, 287-9.
[2] Charlevoix, I, 255.
[3] Jesuit Relations, XXIV, 271-3.

On May 9 as soon as the ice had gone out, two canoes of Algonkin coming down from the Huron country laden with peltry were lost in an Iroquois ambush. A month later a Huron convoy of thirteen canoes, carrying sixty men and their peltry, together with the letters and the Relation of the Huron mission, were ambushed by forty Iroquois half a league above Montreal. Twenty-three prisoners and all the furs were taken.(1 Another band of Iroquois encamped in an old fort three or four leagues from Three Rivers. Among them were three Huron prisoners who had been taken the year before with Father Jogues. Two of these escaped and brought news of Jogues' treatment in captivity. When Montmagny came up to Fort Richelieu with four shallops, prepared for war or peace, the Iroquois simply withdrew into the woods when the shallops appeared and when they departed came back to the edge of the water to keep watch on the Algonkin and Hurons. Against such a wily, elusive foe the military tactics of Europe were of no avail. Only by carrying the war into the Iroquois country could the French hope to strike a decisive blow, but in the pitifully weak state of New France such a course was out of the question.

During this summer a letter addressed to the Governor was brought to Fort Richelieu by an adopted Huron captive who was with a band of Iroquois prowling around the fort. Written for sake of secrecy in a mixture of Latin and French by the tortured fingers of the captive Jogues, it gave valuable information on Mohawk military strength.

> There are here nearly three hundred arquebuses and seven hundred Iroquois; they are skilled in handling them. They can arrive at the three rivers by various streams; the Fort of Richelieu gives them a little more trouble but does not hinder them altogether..... The design of the Iroquois, as far as I can see, is to take, if they can, all the Hurons; and, having put to death the most considerable ones and a good part of the others, to make of them both but one people and only one land.(2

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXIV, 277.
(2 Ibid., XXIV, 295-7.

Iroquois depredations must have seriously affected the trade this year. According to the testimony of Vimont,

> The Iroquois have so spread themselves along the great stream of St. Lawrence, and along the River des Prairies that there is no security from the lake of St. Pierre, which is a little above the three rivers, even to very far beyond Montreal. These Barbarians conceal themselves, now in one place, now in another, - falling suddenly upon the French, upon the Hurons, and upon the Algonkin, when they see their opportunity; insomuch that one would scarcely dare to navigate, in all the summer, these noble streams, unless Caravans be made, as in Arabia, which we cannot do because of our small number.(1

The Algonkin tribes of the St. Lawrence region had been compelled to abandon the fine hunting grounds south of the river.(2 Between disease, war and famine, their numbers had been greatly thinned.(3 Instead of fleets of three and four hundred canoes, there now but twenty or thirty.(4

In the spring of 1644 ten bands of Iroquois invaded the country. Two went to the Chaudière falls, a place long famous for Iroquois ambuscades. A third encamped at the foot of the Long Sault. A fourth lurked just above Montreal, while a fifth party of eighty warriors lay in ambush for three days on the Island itself. A sixth band of forty warriors went to the River des Prairies where they surprised and carried off a party of Algonkin. A seventh, just above Three Rivers, captured Father Bressani and his savage escort on their way to the Huron country with supplies for the mission. This was the second year in succession in which the supplies had been lost. An eighth went to attack Three Rivers, while a ninth of

(1 Jesuit Relations, XIV, 25.
(2 Ibid., 107.
(3 Ibid., 109. "All these events have so greatly thinned the numbers of our Savages that, where eighty years ago one could see eighty or a hundred cabins, barely five or six can now be seen; a Captain who had then eight hundred warriors under his command, now has not more than thirty or forty ..... And the pitiful part of it is that these remnants of Nations consist almost entirely of women, widows or girls."
(4 Ibid.

over one hundred warriors made for Fort Richelieu. The tenth ravaged the Huron country. In addition, there were several parties that started later.(1

Three fleets of Hurons and Algonkin met with death or captivity this year, one soon after its departure from Three Rivers, another a little above Villemarie, the third about sixty leagues higher up, "for the peril continues over a hundred leagues of the road."(2 A single band got through, bringing back Brébeuf, who had been away for three years, and this was a band escorted by soldiers. Brébeuf brought gloomy tidings of Iroquois ravages which were depopulating the country and making the Hurons "think of giving up the trade with the French, because they find it costs them too dear, and they prefer to do without European goods rather than to expose themselves, every year, not to a death that would be endurable, but to fires and flames, for which they have a thousand times greater horror."(3

Under such circumstances it is not surprising that Montmagny, painfully aware of the weakness of Quebec's defences and desperate for the safety of his colony, snatched at any chance of respite which would enable him to redeem some captive or allow some convoy to pass more freely and not ruin the trade altogether, provided peace could be secured without too great a sacrifice of French honour and dignity. Consequently when Champflour sent word that three Iroquois had been captured near Fort Richelieu by a war party of Hurons, he came down to Three Rivers post haste from Quebec to request their surrender in order to use them as a means of negotiating peace. The Algonkin readily surrendered one who had

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXVI, 55 ff.
(2 Ibid., XXVII, 47.
(3 Ibid., 57.

been given to them to wreak their vengeance on, but the Hurons insisted on taking the remaining two captives back to their own country in order to consult the older chiefs. To protect them on the journey the Governor provided an escort of twenty soldiers, part of a reinforcement sent out from France this summer. They were to live with the Hurons during the winter and bring them back to trade in the spring.

The year 1645 witnessed two events which seemed, for the time at least, to herald a happier future for New France and for the trade. One was the conclusion of peace with the Mohawk who had been giving most trouble to the French and closing the St. Lawrence trade route to the Hurons and Algonkin. The Iroquois prisoner who had been kept at Three Rivers during the winter was sent back to his own country in May 1645 to make peace overtures on behalf of the Governor. His mission was successful and at the beginning of July he returned with two chiefs who had been delegated to negotiate peace with the French and their savage allies. With them came Couture, taken captive with Father Jogues in 1642 and since that time a prisoner in the Mohawk country. On July 12 Montmagny gave them audience in the courtyard of the Fort (Three Rivers) in the presence of representatives of the Algonkin, Montagnais, Hurons and Attikamègues. In a long and elaborate harangue the head of the Mohawk delegation declared the willingness of his people to live at peace with the French and presented seventeen belts of wampum as a token of regret for the past and an earnest of goodwill for the future. Two days later the Governor replied, through Couture as interpreter, in a speech which was an admirable blend of courtesy, firmness and dignity, and presented fourteen presents on behalf of the French and their Indian confederates. After the parley had

been brought to a successful termination the Mohawk delegates returned to their country to have the peace ratified. By a fortunate coincidence the canoes of the Hurons, Algonkin and Montagnais were late in coming down this year and a great concourse of more than four hundred was present at Three Rivers when the Iroquois deputies returned on the 17th of September to confirm the peace. On the 25rd the Iroquois ambassadors, accompanied by two Frenchmen, two Algonkin and two Hurons, returned to their own country, leaving three men of their nation as hostages or rather as pledges of their friendship. The following winter witnessed the strange but happy sight of Mohawk and Algonkin peaceably hunting together on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

The peace did not include the four Upper Nations, whose ravages in the Huron country continued unabated. Nevertheless, a respite from Mohawk depredations along the St. Lawrence was enjoyed throughout the autumn and winter of 1645-46 and the following summer, enabling the Hurons to come down unmolested to secure French wares of which they had been deprived in large measure for five or six years. On September 10, 1645 sixty canoes arrived safely with Father Lalemant and the soldiers who had been sent as escort in the previous autumn. On October 29 the vessels sailed for France with 50,000 pounds of beaver aboard, which sold at 10 or 11 francs per pound.(1

The other significant event was the leasing of the trade by the Company of New France to the leading habitants of the colony. For several years the Company had been losing money and consequently was not unwilling to shuffle on to other shoulders the burden of its obligations and the responsibility for actual trading operations, particularly when a deputation

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXXII, 85.

of colonists arrived in France in the autumn of 1644 to place before the Court the grievances and desires of the colony. By the decree of March 6, 1645, therefore, the Company of New France ceded to the habitants the trade in peltry in the region of the St. Lawrence and the rivers flowing into it, on condition that they defray the expenses of government and of the maintenance of religion, bring out twenty immigrants annually and pay a yearly tribute of 1000 livres weight of beaver to the Company. The Company retained its title, seigneurial rights and powers over the territory of New France. However, control of the trade was now vested in local traders who were intimately acquainted with its problems and with the difficulties raised by Iroquois competition. Whether the advantages of this first hand knowledge of existing conditions were sufficient to counterbalance the effects of Iroquois hostility, soon to break out again in open warfare, is a question which the story of the next eighteen years will answer.

The Company of Habitants entered upon its tenure of monopoly with the experience of its predecessor to guide it and it was destined to encounter the same difficulties in more aggravated form. The years when prospects of an expedition against the Iroquois had brought Hurons and Algonkin down to the Rapids in hordes had gone, never to return. The situation had been changed completely by the intensification of the problem which was beginning to make itself felt even in the closing years of our first period (1608-29). This was the hostility of the Iroquois which for several reasons had now assumed an ominous significance. The Mohawk, the most aggressive of the Five Nations, having defeated and expelled their troublesome neighbors, the Mahican, turned their victorious arms northward. Old hatreds were now sharpened by a determination to wrest

from the Algonkin and Hurons the control of the rich fur-bearing region north and west of the St. Lawrence and to divert its trade south to the Dutch on the Hudson, who were now supplying the Mohawk with firearms. Mohawk war parties held the St. Lawrence valley in a virtual state of siege, terrorized the French settlements, frightened Indian traders away from the French trading posts and preyed on those whom audacity or desperate need of French wares nerved to run the gauntlet of Iroquois ambushes. The Algonkin and Hurons, the principal objects of Iroquois fury, had come to rely for protection on the French and this the latter were in no position to supply. The French settlement had grown in size but not in strength. The situation was vastly changed from the time when Champlain and two of his men could put to flight two hundred Iroquois with the terrifying, death-dealing arquebus. Now a French force sufficiently large to defeat the enemy in his own country was necessary to remove the Iroquois menace. That force was not available, as we shall see from a study of the progress of settlement during this period. Meanwhile, as Iroquois power steadily increased with the Mohawk store of firearms, war and disease stalked hand in hand through the Huron and Algonkin country decimating their numbers and shattering their morale and setting the stage for their complete collapse in 1648-50.

Settlement 1653-45

As we have seen, Iroquois hostility seriously affected the trade of New France during this period. Did it exert any influence on settlement? In answering this question we must keep in mind two distinct types of settlement, European and aboriginal. By the first is meant, of course, the establishment of French settlers on the land. The second has reference to one of the favorite projects of the early missionaries, that of rendering the nomadic tribes sedentary and establishing Indian colonies. Since this was the period of most intense missionary activity, attempts at aboriginal settlement were particularly prominent during these years. The influence of the Iroquois on French settlement, meaning here the number of colonists who took up residence in New France, is difficult to estimate for a number of reasons which will be considered below. On aboriginal settlement, however, Iroquois influence can be more clearly traced, though it is a moot point whether the dreams of the Fathers could ever have been realized even under the most favourable conditions. We shall find that Iroquois ravages not only cut short certain promising attempts at Algonkin settlement but ultimately drove the sedentary tribes from their villages and reduced them for many years to the status of homeless wanderers.

In attempting to assess the responsibility of the Iroquois for the slow development of New France we must not overlook certain other factors, some of which have been already noted, which militated against the growth of a strong, populous French colony on the banks of the St. Lawrence. One is the fact that the French, though ranking second to none in sending out missionaries to all parts of the globe, are not and

never have been a "colonizing" race judged by English standards. There has been no mass emigration from France comparable to that which has peopled two continents with nations speaking the English tongue. Further, the New England colonies were in origin settlements of religious Nonconformists who sought in the New World the freedom to practise their faith which was denied them in the Old. In France, however, clerical influence in government circles was so great and the missionary spirit so powerful that the Huguenots, the only section of the nation with a strong motive for emigrating, were barred from New France lest they infect with their heresy the heathen tribes whose conversion to Catholicism was the principal object of Jesuit labours. Another, though much less desirable, class of prospective settlers was virtually barred from New France by the ruling which prohibited the colonists from taking any part in the fur trade.

In trying to determine to what extent the Iroquois wars acted as a deterrent to immigration, we must not forget that the 17th century was very different from the 20th with its wonderful facilities for disseminating news and its widespread literacy even among the humblest citizens. The terrors of Iroquois warfare could only reach the ears of the French public through the testimony of those who had lived in or visited New France, missionaries, colonists, ships' crews and traders, and the circle which they could reach must necessarily have been small. Among the best informed and probably the best educated authorities on the situation in New France were the Jesuit missionaries and their letters and Relations, printed in Paris by Cramoisy, had a wide vogue in educated circles in France. But again the class which they reached was small in comparison to the nation at large and its members, with one or two exceptions, could

not be considered prospective settlers under any conditions. These exceptions were the group of zealots whose passion for self-sacrifice was only further stimulated by tales of Iroquois horrors, and that class which is to be found in all countries and in every age, youths seeking adventure and fortune in the wilds. During this period the missionary spirit was at its height and there was no lack of men and women to answer the call for aid in ministering to the needs, spiritual, mental and physical, of savages and colonists. But they, again, were not the material of which a colony is made. They were there to serve, not to settle and found families.

In considering the question of colonisation in the 17th century we must remember also that at this time government authority imposed restrictions on individual enterprise and the independent emigration of our own day was almost unknown, partly for this reason, partly because of the prohibitive cost of the transatlantic voyage. Emigration thus depended almost entirely on the initiative of private individuals of means and particularly of chartered companies, the usual instrument employed by the governments of northern Europe at this period to carry out the work of colonisation.

The failure of the early companies to carry out their colonizing obligations was demonstrated in the previous chapter. The fundamental clash of interests between fur trade and settlement still remained under the regime of the Company of New France. Over its predecessors it had the advantages of a large initial capital and a large body of shareholders, among whom were men influential enough in government circles to assure the Company of reasonable security of tenure. On the other hand, unlike its predecessors, it had to contend with Iroquois hostility, which as time went on had an increasingly baneful effect on the trade upon which the

Company depended to finance colonization. During the earlier period (1608-29) company neglect was the main obstacle to colonization. During the period 1632-45 this still holds true, but the Iroquois, hitherto a negligible factor, played a more important part.

Apart from the effect of Iroquois depredations on the trade and its implications for settlement, what were the prospects of success for settlement under the Company of New France ? The personnel of the Company, a source of strength in numbers and influence, was in another sense an element of weakness. The head of the Company, the Cardinal himself, was absorbed in matters which seemed infinitely more important than the little colony across the Atlantic. The Intendant, de Lauson, was remarkable chiefly for the zeal he showed in carving out for his family choice tracts of land in New France. The majority of the shareholders were connected with the court and the government, nobility of the sword and gown, who in France have rarely been distinguished for altruism. As profits dwindled, so did their numbers. A small proportion of the shareholders were wealthy merchants who had previously engaged in the Canadian trade and to this experienced group the affairs of the Company were confided very early in its career. The record of the previous twenty years indicated clearly enough that their influence would not be exerted on the side of carrying out colonizing obligations. The personnel of the Company, then, did not augur well for the progress of the colony.

In return for the extensive privileges granted to it under the charter of 1628 the Company of New France undertook to take out three hundred colonists yearly or some four thousand before 1645. How did it carry out this pledge ? It started out nobly but met with unfortunate reverses. In 1628 its whole fleet, bearing colonists and supplies,

was captured by the English. In 1629 another fleet was scattered and lost in storms on the high seas. New France benefitted not at all. The Company lost heavily, the greater part of its initial capital being swallowed up without any tangible results. It began operations in 1633, then, under a financial handicap which did not give much promise of amelioration of the lot of the colony, particularly when the business interests of the Company were taken over by the small inner group of merchants. With this transfer came a return to the old parsimonious tactics of previous companies.

In May 1633 Champlain arrived to take over the duties of Governor of New France. He brought with him a company of about two hundred sailors and colonists with merchandise, supplies and arms in abundance. This was the first, and apparently the last, large group of colonists brought out at the expense of the Company after the recovery of New France from the English. Thereafter the Company seems to have resorted to the practice of granting lands to certain individuals and religious corporations on condition that they send out at their own expense men to clear them.[1] In 1634 the first seigneury (Beauport) was established by Robert Giffard. By the end of 1645 twenty-five seigneuries had been granted, fifteen on the north side of the river, four on the south, and four on islands. On the south there seems to have been no settlers. On the north the population was concentrated between Cap Tourmente and Chavigny.[2] This may have been a convenient device on the part of the Company for fulfilling its colonizing obliga-

[1] Abbe Faillon, Histoire de la Colonie Francaise en Canada (Villemarie, 1865), Vol. I, 344.

[2] Sulte, op. cit., Vol. II, 148.

tions, but it was not the way to establish a strong prosperous colony, as a survey of immigration during these years will show.

In the period 1608-45 some one hundred and twenty-two male and one hundred and nineteen female habitants became established in the colony, most of whom married and left a numerous progeny. Eighty of these arrived in the period 1654-41 and nineteen in the four succeeding years.(1 This is not a very imposing record and it appears in a still worse light when we recall that the bulk of these colonists had come out at the expense of private individuals and religious corporations such as the Society of Montreal. It was obviously not in promoting colonization that the Company spent more than 1,200,000 livres above the revenue of the country.(2 The responsibility for the weak state of New France would appear to be divided, with the Company of New France bearing by far the greater burden. If the Iroquois menace militated against immigration from France, the Company again must be held responsible for the numerical weakness and lack of adequate defence which made that menace so formidable.

Were the Iroquois in any degree responsible for the small number of colonists who took up land in New France during the period 1632-45 ? There is no definite evidence that they were, unless there is some significance in the fact that during the last four years (1642-45) when they became a serious threat to the safety of the colonists, only nineteen settlers came out. On the other hand, however, the Society of Montreal embarked on the Villemarie settlement project in full knowledge of the danger from the Iroquois to which that outpost would be exposed. In

(1 Sulte, II, 148. It would appear that this number does not include the "floating" population, missionaries and their domestics, interpreters, traders, etc.

(2 Letter of the Associates of the Company of New France to the Very Rev. Father General of the Society of Jesus at Rome, June 1651. (Jesuit Relations, XXVI, 69)

fact, their zeal was stimulated rather than depressed by the existence of that danger. The numbers of those who did come out during these years (1632-45) were not seriously depleted by the Iroquois wars. In 1635 three Frenchmen were killed in an Iroquois ambush.(1 In 1640 two were carried off while hunting near Three Rivers but were returned unharmed in the following year.(2 In August 1642 Father Jogues and two French companions fell into an Iroquois ambush and were taken captive. In the Iroquois country they were subjected to horrible tortures but the lives of the Father and of one of his companions were spared. In the following year a band of Iroquois surprised six men working outside the palisades at Villemarie, killing three and carrying off two to torture and death.(3 In 1644 in an encounter between thirty French and eighty Iroquois on the Island of Montreal three of the French were killed and two taken captive to perish later at the stake.(4 Thus, in spite of almost unremitting Iroquois activity, especially after 1640, only fourteen French appear to have perished at their hands during the years 1635-45. It cannot be said, then, that the Iroquois wars took any great toll of life in the French settlements. Their influence on the growth of population does not appear to have been pronounced. But it is quite a different story when we turn to the life of the colony and the progress of aboriginal settlement.

The New France to which Champlain returned in 1633 was a colony of probably less than fifty inhabitants(5 clustered in and around the

(1 Jesuit Relations, V, 215.
(2 Ibid., XXI, 25.
(3 Ibid., XXIV, 277-9.
(4 Ibid., XXVI, 55.
(5 Vide supra, p. 65.

Fort of Quebec. It was a melancholy commentary on the efficiency of the trading company as a colonizing agent. Yet, though the destinies of New France had again been confided to the care of another such organization, the experiences of the past faded before the prospects which the future seemed to offer and Champlain might well have thought that under the Great Company a new and happier era had dawned for New France. He had brought out with him a goodly number of settlers. The Jesuit Relations of 1632 and 1633 had created considerable interest in the colony in the western maritime provinces of France. From Dieppe, Rouen, Honfleur and Cherbourg came young men to seek their fortunes in the Canadian wilds. In the summer of 1634 Giffard and his censitaires began the work of clearing land and erecting dwellings on the Seigneury of Beauport and by autumn an infant village reared its head in sight of the ramparts of Quebec. In the same year another settlement was started sixty miles above Quebec at Three Rivers, long a favorite trading rendezvous for the western tribes. There was reason to believe that under the protection of the fort the Algonkin might return to their former home here, from which they had been driven by the Iroquois.(1 The latter, though troublesome on the river, had not disturbed the French settlers. The clearing and cultivation of the land went on apace, particularly on the Beauport seigneury, making the settlers somewhat less dependent on the yearly supply ships from France than they had been during the first twenty years of the colony's existence. There was one serious deficiency, namely, the lack of adequate defense. The military element in the colony was negligible, since the settlers were drawn largely from

(1 Jesuit Relations, VIII, 29.

the small artisan class and had been selected for the business of the fur trade or for the cultivation of the land, not for the pursuits of the soldier. Shortly before his death Champlain appealed to the Cardinal for a force of one hundred and twenty men which, supported by an army of the Indian allies of the French, he believed would be sufficient to reduce the Iroquois to terms.[1] But the Cardinal was absorbed in the game of European politics and the armed forces of France were occupied elsewhere and the appeal went unheeded.

It was not until the winter of 1636-37 that the Iroquois approached the French settlements, when evidence was found that a party of one hundred and fifty had been within two days journey of Three Rivers. In the following May apprehension of Iroquois attacks caused a panic among the savages who had come to dwell around that post for the summer months, and so a barricaded village was built under the shelter of the fort. On August 6 an Iroquois canoe paraded down the river before the fort and a barque under the command of the interpreter Nicolet, sent out to reconnoitre, reported that about five hundred Iroquois were in ambush in the vicinity. The defences of the fort were put in order and a canoe despatched to Quebec for reinforcements. The Iroquois, however, forbore to attack and retired upstream to ambush the Huron fur fleet. For three years thereafter the settlement seems to have been left in peace while the Iroquois harried the Algonkin. In the autumn of 1640 a band of sixty came to prowl around Three Rivers and carried off the interpreter François Marguerie and a companion who were hunting in the neighborhood. As yet only the Mohawk had openly taken the field against the French and the influence of the Upper

[1] Vide supra, p. 79.

Nations was sufficient to preserve the two prisoners unharmed and even to persuade the Mohawk to enter into peace negotiations with the French. At the beginning of June in the following year, a party of three hundred and fifty warriors brought the two Frenchmen back to Three Rivers and parleys were held in which the Iroquois made known their desire for peace with the French. Negotiations broke down when Montmagny insisted that the peace must include the Indian allies of the French and failed to produce the arquebuses which the Iroquois had hoped to receive as presents. Iroquois conduct gave the Governor good reason to believe that the proposed peace was merely a ruse to separate the French from the Algonkin and Hurons in order that they might be more easily overcome one by one.

It was probably as a result of this incident that Father Le Jeune returned to France this year to appeal for aid in defending the colony from the Iroquois. His plea was answered by the Cardinal with the advance of 10,000 écus for the erection and manning of fortifications. Since the Mohawk used the mouth of the Richelieu River as a base for their operations, it was decided to erect a fort there which might in some measure prevent the use of the river as a highway into New France. This was done in the autumn of 1642 and a garrison of forty men, sent out by the king, was left to man the post. The construction of Fort Richelieu, as it was named in honour of the Cardinal, was largely wasted effort. The Iroquois soon learned to avoid the fort by means of a portage and a detour through the woods, and three years after its erection it was abandoned.

The construction of the fort on the Richelieu, however admirable from the standpoint of European strategy, showed that the French had not yet learned to adapt themselves to Indian methods of warfare. Of what use was a fort against an enemy who refused to come to grips and whose tactics consisted in dividing his forces into small bands which, hidden in the forests and underbrush near portages and the outlying settler's

cabin, attacked suddenly and only when in superior force ? The Iroquois had too much respect for French cannon to venture to attack French posts in force. The forts were useful as a protection for their inmates and as a refuge for the settlers who dwelt outside their walls, but against Iroquois ambushes they offered no protection whatsoever. For New France the best defence was offense, carrying the war to the Iroquois country and defeating them there. But New France was not in a position to take the offensive, thanks to Company neglect. Owing to the interests of trade and missions, she was not even in a good defensive position. Considerations of the trade and of aboriginal settlement had been largely responsible for the selection of the site of the second settlement, Three Rivers, separated by sixty miles of wilderness from Quebec. This separation was a source of weakness, particularly in view of the small population of the colony. Missionary order, overriding the dictates of military strategy, resulted in the same mistake being committed again in the establishment of the third settlement at Villemarie on the Island of Montreal.

In the year 1641, when the desperate state of the colony had sent Le Jeune to France in search of aid, there arrived at Quebec the vanguard of the body of settlers sent under the auspices of the Society of Montreal to found a colony on that island. The colony of Montreal was a religious enterprise. Its founders were Jerome Royer de la Dauversière, receiver of taxes at La Flèche in Anjou, and Jean Jacques Olier, a young priest of Paris. To both these men came, at nearly the same time (about 1636), the idea of founding a religious colony on the Island of Montreal for the conversion of the savages. Meeting accidentally in Paris in 1640, they joined forces and formed an association of at first six members, a number increased within two years to thirty-five, largely persons of rank and wealth. Notable among these was Mme. de Bullion who gave 42,000 livres for the erection and support of a hospital for the colony. The Associates secured from the Intem-

dant Lauson a grant of the Island of Montreal and in 1641 sent to New France forty men, carefully selected with a view to the defence of the colony against the Iroquois. They were under the command of Paul de Chomedey, Sieur de Maisonneuve, an experienced soldier and a man of great piety and courage. He was accompanied by Mlle. Jeanne Mance, a young woman belonging to an honorable family of Nogent-le-Roi near Langres who had very early in life consecrated herself to the service of God. When they arrived in New France in 1641 the season was too far advanced for the prosecution of the enterprise and so the winter was spent at Quebec.

During Maisonneuve's stay at Quebec Montmagny did his best to persuade him to change his plans and establish the colony on the Isle of Orleans near Quebec. An assembly of the principal inhabitants was convoked to deliberate on this counter proposition. It was urged that a colony on the Isle would be convenient for mutual aid in the event of attack, that a combination of forces might inspire fear in the Iroquois, and that to plant a colony on the remote island of Montreal would merely invite Iroquois attacks. But to all warnings and all arguments Maisonneuve replied, with the sublime courage and folly which now calls forth both our admiration and censure,

> "I came not to deliberate, but to act ; and though every tree on the Island of Montreal were an Iroquois, it is my duty and my honour to go and establish a colony there."(1

On May 8, 1642, the little company left for Montreal, accompanied by Montmagny, and landed ten days later on the southeastern corner of the island on the site chosen in the previous autumn. Throughout the spring and summer the colonists were left in peace to perform the tasks incident to the establishment and defence of the settlement which had been named

(1 Faillon, op. cit., I, 424.

Villemarie in honour of the Virgin. It was not until the following year that the Iroquois discovered the new settlement by accident when they were pursuing a small band of Algonkin who fled to the fort for refuge. Being in insufficient numbers, the Iroquois did not make their presence known, but merely reconnoitred secretly and returned to their own country with the news. From that time on the colonists at Villemarie lived in constant danger of attack.

In 1643 the Iroquois changed their tactics. Instead of sending out large bands at certain times in the summer and afterwards leaving the River free, they separated into small bands which set out from the Iroquois country one after the other and kept the French and their Indian allies in a perpetual state of insecurity.[1] One such band in June killed three Frenchmen who were working two hundred paces from the palisades of Villemarie and carried off three others, parading insolently past the fort. From within the French settlers watched helplessly, knowing that it was useless to give chase, since it was customary only for a small party to attack while the others of the troop remained in ambush in the thick of the woods where to attempt to pursue them would have been suicidal. During the rest of the year the Iroquois infested the island. The settlers were kept confined within the fort and ventured out to till the fields only in a body as a precaution against surprise. In this year Villemarie received another group of colonists, bringing the population to seventy.[2] Among these latest recruits was M. Louis d'Ailleboust, in whom Maisonneuve found a worthy and useful lieutenant. Under his direction the fortifications of the settlement were immediately improved.

[1] Jesuit Relations, XXIV, 271-3.
[2] Faillon, op. cit., I, 452.

Villemarie was exceedingly fortunate in having as its governor a soldier such as Maisonneuve to whose ease and perspicacity it owed in no small measure its ability to weather the storms of almost continual Iroquois siege. His was the idea of sending the colonists in a body to till the fields. He was responsible for the defensive tactics which husbanded the strength of the colony and wisely refused the pleas of some of the more hot-headed to take the offensive against the foe. His caution led to whispered accusations of cowardice which threatened to undermine his position. Thus on March 30, 1644, he led thirty men against a party of eighty Iroquois. The French were forced to fall back with the loss of three men killed and two taken prisoner. Thereafter Maisonneuve's authority and wisdom were unchallenged. All his precautions, however, could not overcome Iroquois interference with the normal cultivation of the soil, which was seriously curtailed and made Villemarie largely dependent on supplies from outside.

In the summer of 1644 sixty soldiers sent at the expense of the Queen Regent arrived to bolster the defences of New France. During the winter of 1644-5, however, the Iroquois kept Villemarie and Fort Richelieu in a virtual state of siege. "The people who dwell in the forests of Richelieu and of Montreal," reported Vimont, "were brought and shut in more closely than any Religious or any Nun in the smallest monastery of France."(1 However, not a man was lost. In July 1645 peace was concluded with the Mohawk, the nation chiefly responsible for the harrying of French and Algonkin.(2 It is not unlikely that the presence of the

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXVI, 221.
(2 Vide supra, p. 91.

soldiers who had accompanied Montmagny to the assembly of the tribes helped to persuade the Mohawk of the desirability of peace.

The year 1645 witnessed also a reorganization of the trade and of the administration of the colony. In the previous year six or seven gentlemen of rank had approached Montmagny, asking him to associate himself with them in an attempt to get control of the trade. In the past he had opposed this proposition, but harassed by Iroquois depredations and seeing no hope of aid from the Company of New France, he consented to support an arrangement which would place control of the affairs of the colony in the hands of the inhabitants. Under the arrangement of 1645[1] the Company of Habitants undertook definite obligations for the defence of the colony, namely, to maintain at least one hundred men for garrison duty[2], to repair the forts and furnish them with arms and munitions of war.

With control of the trade in the hands of men familiar with the needs of the colony, it seemed reasonable to expect that this time the obligations in regard to colonization and defence would be carried out. Unfortunately, however, the funds for these purposes had to come from the profits of the trade and this depended largely on the free passage of the Hurons and Algonkin down to the harbor, which was impossible so long as the Iroquois held the St. Lawrence in a state of siege. When news of the transfer arrived, peace with the Mohawk had been concluded, but how long would it last ?

(1 Vide supra, p. 92.

(2 Seventy were to be stationed at Quebec, subject to dispersion through the colony as the Governor deemed advisable, while thirty were to form a garrison for Villemarie.

On the continuation of peace depended the success of the trade, the safety and prosperity of the colony, and the progress of aboriginal settlement, a phase of the life of New France which we have so far ignored. The favorite project of Father Le Jeune began to assume material form in 1637 with the establishment of a settlement of Indian neophytes at Sillery four miles above Quebec, named after Noel Brulard, Chevalier de Sillery, who had furnished the necessary funds. Hitherto, through lack of men and means, which the Company showed no disposition to provide, no permanent aboriginal settlement had been founded, although after the erection of the fort at Three Rivers many Algonkin were wont to encamp there during the summer months. Close on the heels of Sillery's bequest came the offer of the Duchesse d'Aiguillon to found a hospital, and of Mme. de la Peltrie to establish a seminary for Indian girls. The project of the Montreal Associates to found a settlement on the Island of Montreal was likewise inspired by zeal for the conversion of the savages. Private initiative was now beginning to undertake the task which the Company had neglected. Unfortunately, however, the removal, in part at least, of the financial obstacle to the establishment of Algonkin settlements coincided with the aggravation of the other difficulty which stood in the way of the realization of the missionaries' dreams. Obviously the success of aboriginal settlement, assuming of course the willingness of the natives to enter into the scheme, depended largely on the removal of the Iroquois threat to the security of the St. Lawrence settlements. The Iroquois wars not only ruined the trade but also blighted the prospects of establishing the Algonkin on the land and forming colonies of Indian neophytes in conjunction with the French settlements.

At first, however, the project seemed to give promise of success.

Vimont reported in 1640 that an Algonkin settlement had been formed at Three Rivers and that the Montagnais were congregating around the mission of St. Joseph (Sillery), though fear of the Iroquois prevented many of the smaller tribes from joining the native colony there.(1 By 1642 the colony at Sillery comprised thirty-five or forty families of Christian natives. In 1643 the renowned Algonkin chief, Piesharet, and his band settled at Three Rivers. In this year the news of the establishment of the settlement at Villemarie having spread among the Laurentian Algonkin, the natives flocked to the island in great numbers to partake of the hospitality of M. de Maisonneuve and seventy or eighty Indians were baptised at Villemarie. Among these was le Borgne, chief of the troublesome Island Algonkin, who promised to settle there with his family. However, as Vimont noted, the settlement of the Algonkin on the Island of Montreal might be achieved if the Iroquois danger were removed or peace concluded with them, but without that it was extremely unlikely that they would settle there in any numbers.(2 The truth of his conjecture was soon demonstrated. In the following year (1644) not only did fear of the Iroquois keep the savage allies of the French away from Villemarie, but the native inhabitants of Sillery dispersed in terror and the Hospital Nuns stationed there were forced to remove to Quebec.(3 With the conclusion of peace in 1645 the Algonkin and Hurons again flocked to Sillery, Three Rivers and Villemarie. Two Algonkin tribes actually settled on the Island of Montreal, an encouraging sign. But again how long would that peace last ?

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXI, 119.
(2 Ibid., XXIV, 229.
(3 Ibid., XXV, 193.

Our second period (1632-45) closes, then, on a note of hope. Peace had brought with it a revival of the western trade, an opportunity for the French colonists to cultivate their fields in safety, and the return of the Algonkin to their nascent settlements at Three Rivers, Sillery and Villemarie, indications all of the influence of the Iroquois on the daily life of the colony. Whether their influence need have been so great is, of course, another question. The failure of the trading company as a colonizing agent, the unwise division of forces in the settlements established, missionary influence which diverted to impractical schemes of Indian settlement funds which might better have been employed in promoting and protecting French settlements, all these factors combined to give the Iroquois menace its magnitude. As long as the fur trade and missions remained the dominating influences in the life of New France, the Iroquois would continue to occupy a position of undue prominence in the affairs of the colony.

Missions 1632-45

Prior to the English occupation the main interest of New France had been in the fur trade, but after 1632 the trade shares the spotlight with the missions. The reason for the increased emphasis on missionary activity is doubtless to be found in the fact that the field was now left wholly to the powerful and ambitious order of Loyola. The Recollets, a mendicant order whose presence in the colony was regarded by the directors of the Company of New France as more of a burden than a benefit, had been prevented from returning to the mission which they had founded. The Company had agreed to support two priests in each settlement but the activities of the enterprising Jesuits were not confined to ministering to

the spiritual wants of the French colonists. With independent resources and influential and wealthy supporters, they were able to undertake an ambitious missionary program which would have been quite impossible to the Récollets.

Fathers Paul le Jeune and Anne de Noué returned with Emery de Caen in June 1632 to resume the broken thread of Jesuit enterprise and after saying mass under the roof of Madame Hébert and her delighted family, took up their quarters in the dilapidated hovels built by their predecessors on the tiny River St. Charles. For a year they laboured alone, wrestling with the difficulties of the Algonkian tongue. At the end of May 1633 Champlain arrived to resume command at Quebec. With him came four more Jesuits, Massé, Brébeuf, Davost and Daniel. The three last at once made arrangements to return to the Huron country, but the project had to be postponed until the following year when the Hurons refused to take the risk of escorting them. Trouble had arisen with the Island Algonkin who had threatened to kill any Frenchman they might meet. For a year, then, all six Jesuits remained at Quebec, employing themselves, amid their other avocations, in studying the Huron tongue. Le Jeune, the Superior, embarked towards the end of October with a band of Montagnais, chiefly with the object of mastering their language, and accompanied them to their hunting grounds. Until the following April he shared the privations and hardships of their wandering life, almost unendurable to one accustomed to the civilized life, and aggravated in his case by the persecution of the sorcerer of the tribe who saw in the black-robed Father a rival in the magician's art. His experiences this winter

served more than ever to convince Le Jeune that little progress could be made in converting these wandering hordes until they were settled in fixed abodes. Jesuit effort among the Algonkin for the next few years took the form of permanent establishments at such points as Three Rivers and Quebec where the savages came to trade and temporary missions at Tadoussac and Miskou during the trading season. The supreme effort was to be made in the Huron country, the abode of a numerous and stationary population. Here was a hopeful basis for indefinite conquests. With the Hurons won over the faith might spread in ever widening circles to embrace the neighboring kindred tribes, Tobacco Nation, Neutrals and Eries. In time even the ferocious Iroquois might be brought within the fold.

Early in the trading season of 1654, then, we find Brébeuf, Daniel and Davost at Three Rivers awaiting the arrival of the annual Huron fur fleet. They had some time to wait, for the Hurons came late and in small bands and in a miserable state of dejection and alarm. They had suffered heavy losses at the hands of the Senecas[1] and pestilence had ravaged their country. After a great deal of persuasion they consented to take the Fathers and six other Frenchmen back with them. Separated on the way, the three Fathers were reunited at the Huron village of Ihonatiria after weeks of toil, hardship and privation, the ordinary difficulties of the journey having been magnified by the churlishness and neglect of their Indian hosts.

Here at Ihonatiria, the new site of the village of Toanché where Brébeuf had lived three years[2] preaching and baptising, a mission house

(1 Jesuit Relations, VII, 213-214.
(2 1626-29.

was constructed after the Indian model and once more the Huron mission was begun. In 1655 two more Fathers, Bijart and Le Mercier, arrived and in the following year three more, Jogues, Chastelain and Garnier, came to swell the little band of workers at Ihonatiria. Soon the Jesuits were busily engaged in perfecting their knowledge of the language, ministering to the sick and suffering, gathering together the children of the village and instructing them in the rudiments of the Faith. Their friendly offices did not end here. Though peace had been concluded with the Senecs after the disastrous reverses of 1654, the Hurons lived in constant fear of the Iroquois. The Jesuits gave them iron arrow heads and instruction in fortifying their villages. They offered the services of the four Frenchmen armed with arquebuses who had accompanied them to the Huron country. When the Hurons went down to trade one or more of the Fathers accompanied them and lent the weight of their influence to secure their passage past the Island Algonkin.

In the autumn of 1656 the peace with the Iroquois was broken and at the same time a worse scourge than the Iroquois descended on the mission. The pestilence which for two years past had from time to time visited the Huron towns returned with tenfold violence and with it soon appeared the smallpox, which ravaged the country for months taking a terrible toll of life. With a zeal and self abnegation truly noble the priests went from lodge to lodge, from village to village, in restless quest of subjects for baptism. In so doing they exposed themselves to death, since the black robes of the Fathers were blamed by the superstitious natives as the cause of the deadly smallpox. For four years

the plague raged intermittently and the Fathers went around on their errands of mercy not knowing when the signal for their death might be given.

During all this time the war with the Iroquois went on in typical Indian fashion, a war of raids and ambushes. Many times the Fathers watched the death agonies of an Iroquois prisoner and snatched at any opportunity to give him instruction in the Christian religion and, if he proved amenable, to sprinkle on his head the baptismal water which would save him from the fires of the other world. In 1639 war with the Senecs was resumed but the losses of the Hurons were greater than their advantages.(1 The extent to which war and disease had depopulated the country is revealed in the letter which Lalemant addressed to the Cardinal in March 1640.

> "The enterprises of these hostile nations having succeeded, especially within a few years, according to their desires, they have reduced these poor peoples here to such a degree that I do not think, unless the evil be stopped at its source, that they can much longer exist. This will be readily granted when one considers that in less than ten years they have become reduced from thirty thousand souls to ten thousand."(2

In 1638 the Hurons received into their confederacy the small nation of Wenrehronon which had for many years been an associate nation of the Neutrals, located on their boundaries towards the Iroquois. When the Neutrals severed relations with them they were in danger of being wiped out by the Iroquois and decided to take refuge in the protection and alliance of some other nation. Accepted by the Hurons, over six hundred persons made the journey of over eighty leagues to the Huron country.

(1 Jesuit Relations, XIX, 81.
(2 Lalemant to Richelieu, March 28, 1640. Ibid., XVII, 225.

Owing to the hardships of the journey many died and nearly all were sick when they arrived. The refugees were distributed through the principal villages, though most of them remained at Ossossané. This reinforcement, however, could not begin to compensate for the heavy losses suffered by the Hurons through disease and war.

Under the twin scourges of pestilence and war the Faith made slow progress. In 1640 the Huron church comprised only about thirty French and fifty natives making profession. It had been the intention of the Jesuits to form permanent missions in each of the principal Huron towns but before the close of the year 1639 the difficulties and risks of this scheme had become fully apparent. They resolved therefore to establish one central station to serve as a base of operations and as a retreat. The site of the new station was admirably chosen on the right bank of the little River Wye about a mile from the point where it discharges into Matchedash Bay. Its advantages were twofold. On the one hand it had a short water communication with Lake Huron ; on the other, its central position gave ready access to every part of the Huron territory. Here were constructed the buildings which constituted the establishment of Sainte Marie, which, when finished, could accomodate sixty persons. It was strongly defended on two sides with a solid wall of masonry flanked by bastions, intended doubtless as a defence against possible Iroquois attack or perhaps even against the Hurons who at the time were none too friendly. Hither came the Jesuits in the autumn of 1639, abandoning their establishments at Ossossané and Teanostaea.(1 The Huron towns were divided into four districts while those of their allies, the Petuns, formed the fifth, and to each district

(1 The dwelling at Ihonatiria had been abandoned on account of its lack of inhabitants and the mission moved to Teanostaea in June 1639.

were assigned two or more priests. During the winter months when the Indians were gathered in their villages, the Fathers went among them on their missionary excursions. For a few weeks in the summer they gathered together at Ste. Marie for prayer and mutual exhortation.

To Jogues and Garnier fell the new and perilous mission to the Tobacco Nation. On their first visit in November 1639 the Fathers barely escaped with their lives. Their evil fame had gone before them, spread by unfriendly Hurons to whose superstitious minds the black robes of the Fathers were associated with magic and death. A similar reception was accorded to Brébeuf and Chaumonot who in the following year ventured among the Neutrals.

It was not until 1641 that the Iroquois began to be a serious menace to the Huron mission and to the safety of the Fathers working in the Huron country. This year was one of almost unrelieved disaster. The troops raised to carry the war into the enemy camp were defeated. Enemy war parties ravaged the Huron country and the feeling of insecurity spread to the remotest villages. The warriors who had left for the trading at Three Rivers and Quebec had to run the gauntlet of Mohawk ambushes in the St. Lawrence.(1 In 1642 Father Jogues, returning with the supplies for the mission, was captured by the Mohawk and with him twenty-three Hurons, mostly Christians and the flower of the Huron church.(2 In the Mohawk country Jogues and his two French companions were tortured most savagely. One, Couture, was adopted into a Mohawk family in place of a dead relative. Jogues and Goupil were less fortunate, the latter being tomahawked, while the Father was given to a family as a slave. For almost a year he dragged out a painful and perilous existence among his captors, lightened

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXII, 305-9.
(2 Ibid., XXVI, 181.

for him by the opportunities of ministering to the spiritual needs of Huron captives who were being continually brought in and of baptising secretly Mohawk children. In August 1643 while visiting Fort Orange with a fishing party to which he had been assigned as a slave, his escape was connived at by the Dutch commandant, Van Curler, who had several times tried unsuccessfully to ransom him. The Father was treated with every consideration by the Dutch and given passage on one of their ships to England. On January 5, 1644 he was received at the Jesuit college at Rennes like one risen from the dead. The following spring he sailed again for the scene of his martyrdom.

Meanwhile the audacity of the Iroquois rose with each new victory. The Mohawk, armed with Dutch guns, harassed the French settlements and the Laurentian Algonkin. The latter, ravaged by famine, pestilence and war, were reduced to a shade of their former selves.(1 Completely demoralized, they became humble and docile in the hands of the missionaries and leaned pathetically on the French to whose doors hunger brought them to ask for alms.(2 The Algonkin of the Ottawa, forced to abandon not only their hunting grounds but also their country, sought safety near the Hurons.(3

The Hurons, however, fared no better at the hands of the Upper Iroquois, whose incursions were almost uninterrupted. In 1648 one of the frontier villages was wiped out. "The country was but one scene of massacre ..... throughout the whole summer (1648) there was nothing but fresh rumours of massacres happening one after the other, in the heart of

(1 Jesuit Relations, XIV, 109.
(2 Ibid., 107.
(3 Ibid., XXVII, 26.

the country and close to the villages that were most remote from the enemy ; and yet it was never possible to capture more than two."(1 Under these successive blows the morale of the Hurons was shattered. One party was so overcome with fright that it melted away at the mere sight of the Iroquois, although six times more numerous than the enemy.(2 Troops raised in large numbers to pursue the invaders over the frontiers were defeated and routed. Captives were taken in hundreds. Frequently the only bearers of these dismal tidings were unfortunates who had escaped from the midst of the flames, whose half burnt bodies and mutilated fingers bore eloquent testimony to the truth of their words. The scourge of war was accompanied by famine, universal among the tribes for one hundred leagues around.(3 Many of the best Huron warriors fell into Mohawk ambushes as they made their way to the French trading posts. In 1643 the letters and the Relation of the Huron mission fell into the hands of the Mohawk and the supplies of the mission were again lost on the way upward.(4 In 1644 three more Huron fleets met with death or captivity. Another, escorted by twenty soldiers provided by the Governor, got through, bringing back Brébeuf who had been absent for three years and supplies of which the mission had been deprived for two years.

Yet Christianity flourished in the midst of adversity as it had never done in times of prosperity, despite heavy losses of Christians killed or captured and despite the slanders of the heathen party and the "diabolic ceremonies" which invaded every phase of savage life. "The use

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXII, 179.
(2 Ibid., 179.
(3 Ibid., XXVII, 65.
(4 Ibid., XXIII, 269.

of arquebuses, refused to the Infidels by Monsieur the Governor, and granted to the Christian Neophytes" was an even more potent argument than Jesuit exhortations to win the Hurons to the Faith.[1] Six stationary churches, Ste. Marie, La Conception, St. Joseph, St. Michael, St. Ignace and St. Jean Baptiste, ministered to the Hurons and Petuns, while among the Algonkin wintering on Lake Huron the mission of the Holy Ghost was established. Lack of workers prevented the Jesuits from carrying on their labours, begun two years before, among the Neutrals, but some of the Christian Hurons preached among them with considerable success.

In the spring of 1644 the Huron mission lost another of its labourers when Father Bressani followed Jogues into captivity among the Mohawk. Like Jogues he suffered all the torments which savage ingenuity could devise but his life was spared. Again like Jogues he was ransomed by the Dutch at Fort Orange, nursed back to health and sent to France, whence he returned in the spring of 1645 to dare again the knives and firebrands of the Iroquois.

In 1645 peace was concluded with the Mohawk. The Hurons who went to trade were not molested and were able to secure French wares of which they had been deprived for five or six years. But war with the four Upper Nations continued and in this honours were divided. On the St. Lawrence, however, Montagnais and Algonkin took advantage of the lull in hostilities to flock to the French settlements. Projects of Algonkin settlement, interrupted by Mohawk ravages, were resumed at Villemarie, Three Rivers and Sillery and gave promise of success if peace could be maintained.[2] At the close of 1645 there was

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXV, 27.
(2 Vide supra, pp. 109-110.

reason to hope that a happier future was in store for the missions. The Hurons chastened by adversity were turning towards the Faith and seemed to be emerging from the apathy of fear into which they had fallen. The Algonkin, whom terror of the Iroquois had forced to seek the distant forest fastnesses beyond the reach of missionary endeavour, were coming back, in sadly depleted numbers, it is true, to the French settlements and their priests now that peace with the Mohawk had removed the chief obstacle to their return. Nay, even more, the ferocious Mohawk might be won over to the Faith if peace should continue.

"Le Temps Heroique" 1645-1663

The year 1663 marks a turning point in the history of New France. In that year the era of the trading companies came to a close and the colony became a royal province under the direct administration of the king and his ministers. For this change in French colonial policy the Iroquois must be held primarily responsible. Their ravages during the period 1645-1663 revealed the full extent of the failure of the chartered company as a colonizing agent. With the impotence born not of cowardice but of weakness, New France had to stand by and watch the Algonkin scattered and the Hurons as a nation swept out of existence in 1648-50. With them perished the best hopes of the Jesuit missions and the western trade which had depended upon them as middlemen. Thereafter, with but one or two short intervals of respite, New France had to face a concerted onslaught of the Five Nations directed with a persistence and fury hitherto unknown. That the colony survived at all may be attributed to the valor of her sons and to the fact that the Iroquois combined with their military prowess only the political instincts of the savage.

The Fur Trade 1645-63

The Company of Habitants celebrated its assumption of control of the trade with a very successful season, securing for its share ninety-eight casks, or roughly 20,000 pounds, of beaver.[1] The

[1] Jesuit Relations, XXVIII, 235.

peace with the Mohawk continuing, the following year brought even greater profits. More than eighty Huron canoes came down in September 1646. The local traders obtained one hundred and sixty casks or 32,000 pounds of beaver this year.[1] Father Jogues, shortly before leaving on his last visit to the Mohawk, wrote back to France that "Peace, together with the trade which the country now has, causes a notable change in its appearance, an increase in the number of inhabitants, and greater comfort in all respects."[2] But alas ! this state of affairs could not last. Even then it was drawing rapidly to a close. The brief peace with the Mohawk was merely the calm before the coming storm.

Jogues left for the Mohawk country on September 29, 1646 with a premonition that he was going to his death. Nineteen days later an Iroquois hatchet took the life of the first Jesuit martyr of New France and gave the signal for the resumption of hostilities. The news did not reach New France until the following June. Meanwhile the Mohawk spread themselves through the forests south of the St. Lawrence, capturing one hundred Algonkin who, ignorant of the breach of peace, were hunting there, and held the approaches to the western tribes blocked. There was no longer even the little fort on the Richelieu to dispute their passage or give warning of the new offensive. It had been abandoned in the autumn of 1645 and burned by the Iroquois, probably in the spring.

Early in 1647 the Hurons entered into negotiations with the Onondaga. The friendly Andastes likewise made representations on their

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXVIII, 235.
(2 Ibid., XXVIII, 139. (Jogues to the Rev. Andre Castillon, Sept. 12, 1646)

behalf. Peace was virtually concluded with the Onondaga and Cayuga and the Oneida were said to be not unfavourable. Seneca and Mohawk, however, would not hear of it and continued to wage a bloody war against the Hurons, destroying their frontier villages and keeping others in a state of perpetual alarm. For this reason the Hurons did not come down to trade this year. Only six braved the terrors of Iroquois ambush and of these three were taken captive by the Mohawk.(1 The trading brought to Three Rivers only a handful of Attikamegue(2, thirty canoes in all, and a few Algonkin of the Irequet tribe. These people had come by way of the St. Maurice and they brought the letters and Relations of the Huron mission.

The failure of the trade this year was keenly felt in the colony owing to a change which had been brought about in the conduct of the trade. The transfer of the trade to the inhabitants of the colony in 1645 had had the result of limiting it in practice to a few enterprising individuals who devoted their energies to the collection of furs, to the neglect and detriment of the clearing, cultivation and permanent development of the country. This state of affairs caused no end of discord in the colony, so by a remedial ruling of March 27, 1647, a change was made in the government of New France and the trade was thrown open to all the habitants. They might now trade produce for the peltry of the Indians which would be bought by the Company warehouses at a price fixed by the Council. Peltry was thus the currency of the colony with which only could be purchased the manufactures of France. Hence through the failure of the trade in 1647 the

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXXII, 29.
(2 An Algonkin tribe living around Whitefish Lake.

colonists were deprived of these.

Though it marked the beginning of the end for the ill-fated Huron nation, the year 1648 was a profitable one for the trade. Being in desperate need of French hatchets and other wares, the Hurons this year banded together for protection and two hundred and fifty of them, led by five of their bravest chiefs, resolved to die or pass through the Iroquois blockade.(1 Accompanied by Father Brebeuf sixty canoes came down laden with peltry. They had journeyed two hundred leagues unmolested but just above Three Rivers encountered a band of one hundred Iroquois who were on their way to prey upon the settlement. Being superior in numbers, the Hurons routed the enemy but tired from the gruelling journey were unable to pursue their advantage further. The Attikamègues also came down again, this time in three bands, the last one of forty canoes. The trade at Tadoussac this year amounted to 40,000 livres profit and in all to 250,000 livres. At least 22,400 pounds of beaver and more than 500 pounds of moose skins were obtained in trade.(2 It was some time before the Company was to reap such a harvest of furs again.

During 1648 and 1649 the Iroquois were less active on the St. Lawrence, their main forces being occupied in the Huron country. Thus though the Hurons were prevented from coming down in 1649 Governor d'Ailleboust was able to send two parties of Frenchmen, sixty in all, up to them. The first band returned in September with 5,000 pounds of beaver valued at 26,000 livres. This was virtually the last consignment of furs from the

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXXII, 179.
(2 Ibid., 103.

Huron country. Furs to the value of 20,000 livres were brought down by the fugitives who accompanied the Fathers of the Huron mission to Quebec in the summer of 1650 but the proceeds were devoted to the establishment of a Huron colony.

Dwarfing all other events in immediate significance for New France during 1649-50 was the ruin and dispersion of the Huron nation which for over thirty years had been the principal link between the French traders and the hunting tribes of what is now northern Ontario. The details of this disaster may best be reviewed in connection with the Missions and here only the broad outline will be given.

The first blow in the great Iroquois offensive was struck in the very month which had witnessed the defeat of one of their parties above Three Rivers by the Huron convoy. On July 4, 1648, the frontier town of Teanostaea was destroyed and the bulk of its inhabitants massacred or dragged away into captivity. Nine months later a similar fate overtook the towns of St. Ignace and St. Louis in the heart of the Huron country. It was the death knell of the Huron nation. Within two weeks after the disaster, fifteen Huron towns had been abandoned and the greater number burned, the inhabitants frenzied with fear "scattering in the woods and forests, on the lakes and rivers, and among the islands most unknown to the enemy."[1] In bands large and small they roamed, some northward and westward; some hid themselves on the rocks and islands of Lake Huron; some took refuge with the Tobacco Nation; a few joined the Neutrals on the north shore of Lake Erie. Plague and famine took an even greater toll of life than the Iroquois. Even in their places of refuge the implacable fury of the enemy pursued them. In the autumn of 1649 the Iroquois

[1] Jesuit Relations, XXXIV, 197.

turned against the Tobacco Nation. A year later the powerful Neutrals as a nation ceased to exist. The neighboring Algonkin, Nipissings and Algonkin of the Isle, did not escape the cataclysm. Many were massacred; the remainder, panic-stricken, followed the Hurons in their westward flight or flocked to the French settlements seeking protection. When in June 1650 the Fathers of the Huron mission undertook the hazardous task of transporting three hundred of their Huron neophytes to the shelter of the French settlements, they passed through a country once populous and prosperous, now a desolate waste with no sign of human habitation save charred ruins which told more plainly than any words the fate of the hapless parties which had paused there.

The fortunes of the Hurons and Algonkin will be followed in more detail in connection with the Missions. It is sufficient here to note that these tribes had been scattered and all prospects of trade in that direction disappeared for many years. Many had survived the holocaust. The islands and the north shore of Lake Huron were dotted with encampments of Huron and Algonkin fugitives but while the enemy held the Lower Lakes and the St. Lawrence it was not likely that they would again expose themselves to the horrors of Iroquois ambushes. The destruction of the Hurons involved their disappearance as the middlemen on whom the French had depended hitherto to bring down the furs of the northern hunting Indians. The task of seeking out remote tribes now devolved upon the French and the operations of the trade thereby became increasingly expensive. The constant inroads of the Iroquois and the innumerable difficulties attendant upon the reorganization of the trade in the interior after the Huron collapse led to the situation described in the Relation of

1652-3.

> Never were there more Beavers in our lakes and rivers, but never have there been fewer seen in the warehouses of the country. Before the devastation of the Hurons, a hundred canoes used to come to trade, all laden with Beaver skins; and each year we had two or three hundred thousand livres worth. That was a fine revenue with which to satisfy all the people and defray the heavy expenses of the country..... The Iroquois war dried up all these springs. The Beavers are left in peace and in the place of their repose; the Huron fleets no longer come down to trade; the Algonkin are depopulated; and the more distant Nations are withdrawing still further, fearing the fire of the Iroquois. For a year, the warehouse of Montreal has not bought a single Beaver-skin from the Savages. At Three Rivers, the little revenue that has accrued has been used to fortify the place, the enemy being expected there. In the Quebec warehouse there is nothing but poverty; and so everyone had cause to be dissatisfied, there being no means to supply payment to those to whom it is due, or even to defray a part of the most necessary expenses of the country.(1

The trade seems to have continued at Tadoussac as usual since the Iroquois did not penetrate so far eastward and at this post, where the supervision of the Company was less effective, the exhilarating eau de vie could be obtained with little difficulty. Indeed, Marie de l'Incarnation reported in the year 1652, when the western trade had almost vanished, that the trade from the north was more abundant than ever.(2 But the colony did not enjoy the profits of the trade of the Saguenay region. They went to the grasping Governor de Lauson who had established at Tadoussac a private firm and excluded the Company of Habitants from the post.(3

In the year 1653, despite continual Iroquois attacks on Ville-marie and Three Rivers, there came a gleam of hope. In the spring three canoes arrived at the latter post with news that a large force from a number of western tribes was gathering with the intention of breaking through the Iroquois cordon and getting down to Quebec in the following

(1 Jesuit Relations, XL, 211.
(3 Faillon, op. cit., I, 245-4.
(2 Sulte, op. cit., III, 58.

year. In June sixty Onondaga appeared before the fort at Villemarie to treat for peace and exchanged presents with the French. The Oneida and Cayuga likewise expressed a desire to be included in the peace. In September the Mohawk unexpectedly proposed a truce pending the conclusion of a "lasting" peace. By the end of the year all nations save the Seneca were at peace with the French. In the following summer Father Le Moyne was sent to Onontagué, the principal town of the Onondaga, to ratify the treaty on behalf of the Governor.

What had prompted the Iroquois to conclude peace at a time when they seemed to have the French at their mercy? The primary aim which was soon revealed was the desire of both Onondaga and Mohawk to lure to their country the six hundred Huron refugees who had formed a mission-settlement under Jesuit guidance on the Isle of Orleans near Quebec. Another motive arose out of intertribal jealousy between the Upper Nations and the Mohawk. As mentioned previously, the latter held the other four nations in a state of dependence since they had to pass through Mohawk territory on their way to trade with the Dutch, a privilege for which they were obliged to pay toll. Peace opened up the possibility of trade with the French by way of the St. Lawrence and the advantages to the Mohawk would thereby disappear. For commercial reasons alone it was not likely that the Mohawk would preserve the peace. For the time being, however, it suited their plans to keep up the pretence until the Hurons were secured and until the war against the Eries, undertaken by the League in the autumn of 1654, was concluded.

In the year 1654, then, the French enjoyed a respite from Iroquois

ravages. A further cause for rejoicing was the arrival this summer of the fur flotilla forecast in the previous year which had come four hundred leagues from the west, capturing thirteen Iroquois en route. It was conducted by the Ottawa, a tribe, who, by their frequent passage over the great stream of the Ottawa in the ensuing years, gave their name to this former "river of the Algonkin." Who were these people ? Where did they come from ?

The Ottawa had been encountered by Champlain in 1615 and by Sagard in 1624 on French River and at the middle of the century were to be found around Saginaw and Thunder Bay, Manitoulin Island and Michilimackinac. Terror of the Iroquois made them seek asylum with some Huron refugees on a group of islands near the south shore of Lake Superior, the "Huron Islands."(1 In 1655 an Iroquois war party of eight hundred men sought them out, but warned by their scouts, the Ottawa and Hurons abandoned their villages and retreated to the mainland northwest of Lake Michigan where they cleared land, planted corn and constructed a fort, resolving to await the enemy there. They had not long to wait. Again the arrival of the Iroquois found them prepared. Unable to make headway against them and running short of provisions, the Iroquois concluded peace and after dividing into two bands took their departure (1655). One band was defeated by the Sauteurs, an Algonkian tribe living in the vicinity of the present Sault Ste. Marie ; the other was almost wiped out by the Illinois, one of whose villages it had ravaged. After this the Ottawa and their Huron allies seem to have pushed on to Wisconsin where they came into contact with the Sioux. The continual hostility of the Sioux whose friendly advances they had repaid with treachery

(1 N. Perrot. Memoire sur les Moeurs, Coutumes et Religion des Sauvages de l'Amerique Septentrionale. p. 80. (Paris, 1864). Quoted in R. G. Thwaites (Ed.) The French Regime in Wisconsin 1634-1727. (Madison, 1902) pp. 9-15.

forced them to flee again, this time to Chequamegon Bay on Lake Superior where they settled. In the course of their wanderings along the northern shore of the Lake they learned that beaver was abundant in the north. Trading parties went north, encountering around Lake Nepigon remnants of the Nipissing and other Algonkian tribes who had fled thither from Iroquois ferocity. At the end of our period we find the Ottawa trading with these tribes, exchanging for their peltry dilapidated French wares, for which the Nipissing, long deprived of European goods, were humbly grateful.(1

In 1654 the Ottawa, then in the neighborhood of Lake Michigan, were instrumental in bringing down the tribes of that region to trade with the French. On August 6, 1654, they set out on the return journey. With them went two French voyageurs who blazed the trail for explorations in the Northwest. Two years later they returned with fifty canoes of Ottawa, carrying two hundred and fifty men and their peltry. The value of these furs so impressed Lauson with the possibility of building up a profitable trade with western tribes that he permitted thirty Frenchmen to make the return journey with the Ottawa convoy. However when the French learned at Three Rivers that a Mohawk war party was lurking in the vicinity, all but three of them declined to proceed farther. These three, together with Fathers Druillettes and Garreau, who had responded to the appeal of the Ottawa for missionaries, continued on with the band. The Ottawa, revelling in the possession of newly purchased firearms, brought upon themselves by their carelessness a Mohawk ambush just below the island of Montreal. After an indecisive combat in which considerable blood was shed on both sides, the Ottawa fled

(1 Perrot, op. cit., pp. 84-95. (Thwaites, French Regime..... , pp. 20-21.

during the night, leaving behind in their hastily constructed fort the two Jesuits and their three French companions. These were conducted by the leader of the Mohawk, the notorious Flemish Bastard, to Villemarie where Father Garreau who had been mortally wounded in the affray expired shortly after his arrival. Fear of the Iroquois revived by this encounter, together with the inroads of the Sioux, kept the Ottawa from coming down again for four years and then only because the French had gone in search of them.

Though still nominally at peace with the French, the Mohawk were again giving trouble in the summer of 1656. It is difficult to believe that peace was ever more to them than a temporary expedient whereby they hoped to lure the Hurons of the Isle of Orleans into their power. Jealousy between the Mohawk and Onondaga flared almost into open hostility when the latter were successful in securing the establishment of a French mission-settlement on the shore of Lake Gannentae.(1 The Mohawk vented their rage in an attack on the Island of Orleans where they massacred several of the Huron Christians and carried off more than sixty prisoners, parading them insolently in their canoes before Quebec. The inhabitants of the fort watched with impotent rage, Lauson having refused to give chase, partly, it seems, through natural timidity, partly through fear of endangering the safety of the little band of French settlers whom his folly had put in Onondaga power. For two more years the uneasy truce continued. Mohawk insolence increased, while the Onondaga, at first enthusiastic over their French friends, became lukewarm and then secretly hostile. In the winter of 1657-58 Dupuys, the commandant of the Gannentae settlement, learned that a plot was on foot to wipe out the French and so quietly

(1 The Gannentae enterprise is more fully described in the section on Missions.

made preparations to evacuate his little company from their dangerous post. At the beginning of April, 1658, after a cunningly devised escape from Gannentae and a harrowing voyage through the swollen waters of Lake Ontario and the ice-strewn St. Lawrence, the colonists arrived safely at Villemarie. In the following month the war with the Five Nations broke out again and was waged more fiercely than ever, the Iroquois having apparently embarked on a war of annihilation against the French and their Indian allies.

By 1658 the savage allies of the French had ceased to come down to the St. Lawrence and instead met French traders in the north between the Ottawa and the Saguenay. Even there the Iroquois followed them. The devastation extended fifty leagues north of Three Rivers and the last hope of trade in that quarter seemed to have vanished. The Iroquois menace had forced the Algonkian tribes to seek refuge in the forests four or five hundred leagues from the French settlements, many of them retiring to Hudson's Bay. The Relation of 1659-60 declares that "everywhere, too, we find the Iroquois, who like an obstrusive phantom, beset us in all places. They prevent the tribes from five or six hundred leagues about from coming down hither laden with furs that would make this country overflow with immense riches."(1 Through their possession of firearms the Mohawk held dominion for five hundred leagues around, yet they occupied only three or four wretched villages and could muster scarcely more than five hundred warriors capable of bearing arms.(2 It was felt by the French that if the Mohawk could be crushed, the other members of the League would be glad to come to terms. But unless aid

(1 Edna Kenton (Ed.) The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents (Toronto, 1925), p. 303.

(2 Ibid., p. 304.

came from France for this purpose it seemed that only a miracle could save the colony.

In the spring of 1660 it seemed to the pious inhabitants of Villemarie that a miracle had indeed saved the colony, when the desperate valor of Dollard des Ormeaux and his little band of sixteen French, one Huron and four Algonkin held at bay for three days an army of seven hundred Iroquois on their way to attack Quebec. The Iroquois were so discouraged by their heavy losses in this encounter that they returned to their villages and the immediate peril passed. A short time afterwards a fleet of sixty canoes swept past the ruins of the rude fort at the foot of the Long Sault where these heroes had made their memorable stand. They carried three hundred Ottawa and peltry to the value of 200,000 francs. Leading them were the intrepid adventurers, Radisson and Groseilliers, returning after two years' absence in the west during which time they had penetrated as far as the Great Plains, being the first white men to come in contact with the Cree and the Sioux. They arrived opportunely at a time when those mainly interested in the trade were on the point of quitting the country, believing that under prevailing conditions no further trade was to be expected. The Jesuit Father, Menard, and eight French companions accompanied the Ottawa to their western homes. Three years later seven survivors returned, bringing with them thirty five canoes of Ottawa with their peltry.

At the beginning of the year 1661 the Mohawk took the field to avenge the humiliating check of the previous year. Within four months they had made a solitude of all the country from Montreal to Tadoussac, forcing the French settlers to keep within the walls of their forts. On the Ottawa River and Lake Huron not an Indian was to be found, so great was the fear of the Iroquois.

> The Iroquois have done more harm this year than in all the preceding, having killed or taken captive more than one hundred French, from Montreal, where they began their ravages, to Cap Tourmente, which is the last of the French settlements; and from there they went above Tadoussac to pursue our new Christian savages, who, to the number of more than eighty canoes, had gone to trade there.[1]

At this juncture the bluff soldier d'Avaugour arrived to take over the duties of Governor and after a hasty tour of inspection through the settlements, addressed an urgent appeal to the king for aid. The Iroquois had spread themselves through the valley from Montreal to above Tadoussac, penetrating far into the northern woods. In the spring of the year two expeditions left Quebec and Three Rivers for the trading in the north. One took the Saguenay route but turned back at Lake St. John on receiving a report that the Iroquois were in the vicinity. The other, a party of thirty Attikamègue and two Frenchmen, was ascending the St. Maurice en route to Lake Necaubs, at this time the trading rendezvous of nearly all the northern tribes, when it was attacked by a war party of eighty Mohawk. The Attikamègue, usually timid, fought with a valor born of desperation but were annihilated after a two day combat. These Mohawk warriors were part of an army of three hundred on its way to attack the savages at Tadoussac. Here they narrowly missed Fathers Dablon and Druillettes who had just left with a band of Montagnais to go by way of the Saguenay to Hudson's Bay. The Fathers penetrated up the Saguenay five hundred leagues to the source of the River Necaubs which discharges into Lake St. John but turned back when news was brought that the Iroquois were approaching, having just destroyed the Squirrel nation. More successful were Radisson and Groseilliers, who, stealing away against the orders of the Governor, reached the watershed

[1 Quoted from the Letters of Marie de l'Incarnation by Faillon, op. cit. II, 427.

of Hudson's Bay and probably the shores of James Bay. In 1665 they returned with a fleet of three hundred and sixty canoes of Crees with their peltry, a development of more than passing significance in view of the later desertion of Radisson and Groseilliers to the English. Contact had been made with the tribes of the great Northwest but the French were not destined to reap the fruits of it.

In 1662 the Iroquois carried their arms far afield and left the French in comparative peace, Villemarie being the only post suffering serious Iroquois attacks. A large party of Mohawk raided a village of the Abenaki of the Kennebec, savages friendly to the French though nominally under English jurisdiction. Another band penetrated one hundred leagues north of Tadoussac to Lake Necauba and attacked the savages of this inhospitable region. Iroquois ventures in the west and in the south were less successful. A party of Mohawk and Oneida on their way to attack the Ottawa was almost annihilated near Sault Ste. Marie by the Saulteurs. The three other tribes, Seneca, Onondaga and Cayuga, sent eight hundred warriors against the Andastes who lived a hundred leagues to the south on the Susquehanna. This party was also forced to retire discomfited. To add to their woes smallpox ravaged the upper cantons, taking a heavy toll of life.

Though enjoying a respite from Iroquois ravages, New France was convulsed by a violent dispute between the Governor and Bishop over the sale of brandy to the Indians. In February 1663 an earthquake rocked the settlement and during a period of six months there were tremblings over a large portion of the continent. The superstitious habitant saw in the heavens terrifying portents of Divine wrath. There was a perfect epidemic of repentance among French and Indian Christians alike. Even the Iroquois

seemed to be chastened. All five nations were disposed to peace, the Onondaga even asking the French to return to their old settlement among them and offering to send as many of their girls as desired to be instructed by the Ursulines and to serve as hostages. The year which had opened in terror and grief now gave promise of better things. It was to be a turning point in the History of New France, for on February 24 the Company of New France surrendered the colony to Louis XIV and New France became a royal province. The era of the trading companies came to a close and though the fur trade continued to play an important part in the life of the colony, it assumed its rightful place as subsidiary to colonization.

The Company of New France had come to an inglorious end. One by one its members had dropped out of the organization until in 1665 only a fraction of the original personnel was left. It had had an unfortunate beginning, suffering heavy losses in the first two years of its existence, and though after 1635 it seems to have made no effort to carry out the heavy responsibilities which it had undertaken, it was always face to face with bankruptcy. The Company of Habitants had fared no better since its tenure coincided with the period of most intense Iroquois activity. The Iroquois had sealed the doom of the trading company as the arbiter of the destinies of New France.

The period 1645-1665 was one of disorganization and disruption of the trade as developed during the previous thirty years. The western trade which depended on the Hurons as middlemen was completely disorganized by the collapse of that nation in 1648-50. During the later 'fifties it was being gradually reorganized with the Ottawa replacing the Hurons as the link between the French and the tribes of the northwest, but the trade even at the close of our period was still spasmodic, irregular, dependent

on the vagaries of the Ottawa and their fortunes at the hands of the Iroquois. The trade centering around the Saguenay was by 1665 beginning to show the effects of Iroquois ravages, since the Mohawk after liquidating the Hurons and the Algonkin of the Ottawa and Upper St. Lawrence turned their arms eastward. The Laurentian Algonkin in terror of the Iroquois were retreating farther and farther north away from the French trading posts.

In reviewing the effect of Iroquois war on trade during the last twenty years of company rule, it must not be assumed that the sequel of events outlined was inevitable. There is every reason to believe that prompt and decisive action at the beginning would have prevented the disasters of 1649-63. The Iroquois menace throve in the media of company neglect of colonization and defence and of government absorption in the game of European and French domestic politics.

Settlement 1645-1665

The régime of the Company of Habitants had opened auspiciously. The trade in 1645 was the best in many years. In 1646 it was even better. Peace had been concluded with the Mohawk in 1645 and the following winter had seen Algonkin and Iroquois hunting peaceably together and the Mohawk freely visiting the French settlements. In March 1646 Mohawk deputies arrived with presents to confirm the peace. A spirit of optimism pervaded the colony to which Father Jogues bears witness. "Peace together with the trade which the country now has causes a notable change

in its appearance, an increase in the number ofinhabitants and greater comfort in all respects."[1] Inwardly, however, conditions were not so satisfactory as appeared on the surface.

The Company of Habitants included no habitants in the strict sense of the term, meaning cultivator of the land, but consisted actually of seven or eight men, related by blood or marriage who, like their predecessors, devoted their energies solely to the collection of furs. There was considerable opposition in the colony to the transfer of the trade and to the new management during the winter of 1645-6.[2] The Algonkin, too, taught by bitter experience, were doubtful that the peace with the Mohawk would last and by rumours and false reports kept the settlements in a state of continual alarm. All these evidences of discord were not lost upon the Mohawk hostages and visitors at Three Rivers and Villemarie, and probably were not without influence on Iroquois policy.

The peace upon which so much depended lasted little more than a year. On October 8, 1646 Father Jogues was murdered by the Mohawk who took the field to surprise the French and their allies before they learned that the peace had been broken. The first intimation of the resumption of hostilities came in November with the capture of three Hurons and two colonists on the Island of Montreal. Immediately the savages who had

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXVIII, 139.

(2 Dissatisfaction reached such proportions that representations were made at court resulting in the remedial ruling of March 27, 1647, which set up a new form of government in the colony. The Governor-General, the Superior of the Jesuits and the Governor of Montreal were to compose a council which was to name the admiral of the fleet, the captains and officers of the vessels, and the commissioners and controllers of the trade. The Commandant of the fleet and the syndics of Quebec, Three Rivers and Montreal had consultative places at the Council board. The Council was to regulate wages, prices and all matters concerning the trade. The habitants might trade produce for the peltry of the Indians which would be bought from them by the Company warehouses at a price fixed by the Council.

settled near Villemarie withdrew. Fort Richelieu, abandoned by the French, was burnt by the Iroquois. At Villemarie and Three Rivers the settlers took added precautions against Iroquois attacks. When the Hurons failed to come down to trade this year owing to Iroquois incursions, the colonists were deprived of French manufactures since they had no furs to trade for them at the Company warehouses. The general discontent found expression in the address presented to the king on behalf of the colonists.

> The intention of his Majesty and the kings his predecessors was to increase the colonies and to people Canada with French Catholics, in order by their example to incline the savages more easily to the Christian religion and to a civilized life as also to draw from these lands some commerce, advantageous and useful to his subjects. However, instead of that, the country is being depopulated and commerce is disappearing, as much through lack of police regulation as through the great debts contracted in order to provide the necessary expenses, as also through the neglect of several articles of the Edict establishing the Company of New France, and also through the non-execution of the last regulation of March 1647 ; but principally because of the incursions of the Iroquois, the common enemy of the whole country, who pillage and ravage the settlements of the French and of the savages, by water and by land, without any steps being taken to remedy the situation.(1

As a result of this appeal, the Council was remodelled in 1648 and a reduction of 19,000 livres effected in the emoluments of the governors. This was to be employed in the formation of a "flying camp" and for the purchase of arms and munitions of war. Permission was also given to the inhabitants of the colony who so desired to go to the Huron country as escort for the savage traders and their missionaries. The "flying camp" was to be composed of forty soldiers taken from the garrisons already existing, if that number of available men was to be found therein ; if not, a levy for them was to be made as soon as possible. This corps was intended to guard the routes by land and water in the summer ; in winter the men were

(1 Quoted in Faillon, op. cit., II, 93-5.

to return to the garrisons or act as scouts. Organized early in 1649, the corps, under the command of Charles d'Ailleboust, did valuable service and two years later was increased by thirty men. The formation of the corps volant marks a new departure in French tactics in dealing with the Iroquois menace. Fort Richelieu with its stationary garrison had proved to be of little value. The creation of this mobile corps demonstrates that the French had profited by past experience and were now adapting their tactics to Iroquois methods of warfare. They were still handicapped, however, by inability to manage the canoe, which made virtually impossible effective pursuit of the Iroquois by water.

This tactical advance coincided, unfortunately, with a retrograde step in the direction of the affairs of the colony. This was the new regulation limiting the term of the Governor-General to three years[1] which threatened to destroy the continuity of policy which, in the military phase, was imperative if the Iroquois threat was to be withstood. This ruling resulted in the recall of Montmagny in 1648. He had presided over the colony for nearly thirteen years, and considering that the odds were against him, had done a creditable job. He had tried to follow the policy of Champlain in regard to the natives. Lacking means to constrain the Iroquois by force, he was able by a happy mixture of conciliation and dignity to inspire respect among them and to suspend for a time their all-conquering march. But the time arrived when this policy was inadequate and it was just at this moment that his experienced hand was withdrawn from the direction of the colony. Fortunately, however, his successor was well chosen and had both experience

[1] This regulation was made after M. de Longvilliers de Poincy, Governor of the French West Indies had refused to surrender the government to his successor and had maintained himself in opposition to the royal orders. The three year term was designed to prevent the Governor from building up in the colony a power which might tempt him to similar action.

and ability. He was Louis d'Ailleboust, one of the Montreal Associates, and since 1645 Maisonneuve's second-in-command at Villemarie.[1] While in France during 1646-7 Maisonneuve had been offered the post of Governor-General but had refused, knowing that he was needed to conserve the settlement at Villemarie. In the interests of harmony between Villemarie and Quebec, which under Montmagny had not always been all that could have been desired, it was decided to choose another of the Associates of Montreal for the post of Governor-General.

D'Ailleboust took over the government of the colony at the moment when the Iroquois launched their great offensive against the Hurons. During 1648 and 1649 their main forces were occupied in the Huron country and in consequence the French settlements enjoyed a period of comparative respite from Iroquois attacks, enabling d'Ailleboust to send men and munitions to Huronia, too late, however, to be of any assistance. Villemarie had to contend with only a few small parties and lost but one colonist. The Huron fur fleet arrived opportunely to disperse a band of one hundred Iroquois loitering around Three Rivers in July 1648. This seems to have been the weakest of the three French settlements, if we can rely on the testimony of Father Buteux.[2] The lull in hostilities on the St. Lawrence resulted in increased activity in clearing the land at Villemarie. Between 1650 and 1652 many obtained provisional grants of land which, for protection against Iroquois attacks, were situated in the neighborhood of the Fort.

(1 Sulte asserts that Maisonneuve had been active in the recall of Montmagny and that d'Ailleboust was his creature and had been a thorn in the side of Montmagny. See "L'Organisation Militaire du Canada, 1636-1648", Trans. Roy. Soc. of Can., 2nd series, Vol. II, sec. 1, 27 (1896).

(2 "There are no defences except of wood; no walls except of palings, which easily catch fire; there is no house, except of bark or thatch; and in these we live, without defense against barbarian attacks or fires." (Buteux to Caraffa, Sept. 21, 1649. Jesuit Relations, XXXIV, 23).

Throughout the year 1650 the colonists at Villemarie saw an almost continual stream of fugitives from the west, each band bringing news of some disaster, of a village pillaged and burnt, a fort lost or of frightful massacres, grim warnings of attacks which they would soon have to meet. The French did not this year feel the full force of Iroquois fury because the Five Nations were then engaged in the destruction of the Neutrals. At Three Rivers, however, there were a number of attacks, one particularly audacious led by the Flemish Bastard who with a force of twenty-five or thirty engaged more than sixty French, killing and wounding several. The colony received this year three hundred Huron refugees, the vanguard of a body of six hundred who settled on the Isle of Orleans near Quebec. Shattered in morale and destitute save for the few furs they brought with them, these new settlers were more of a burden than an asset to the colony.

The Huron tragedy and the certainty that the turn of the French must come sooner or later prompted the Governor to set on foot negotiations with New England, offering "the most ample commercial advantages and considerable compensation for the expenses of the war" in return for English assistance against the Iroquois.(1 The ambassador selected to make this proposal was Father Gabriel Druillettes who had for several years labored as a missionary among the Abnaki, nominally subjects of Plymouth colony, who had also suffered at the hands of the Iroquois. He was received in New England with kindly hospitality and Plymouth, the colony most nearly affected by the Iroquois menace, was heartily in favour of the project.(2

(1 Governor John Winthrop Sr. of Massachusetts had in 1647 made proposals in regard to the improvement and extension of commercial relations between the English and French colonies in North America, but his death prevented the execution of the project.

(2 It is interesting to note, for purposes of comparison, that the four English colonies at this time had a population of at least forty thousand souls according to Druillettes. (Jesuit Relations, XXXVI, 105).

The Boston magistrates and the Lieutenant-Governor, hoping for trade with Quebec, were also favorably inclined, as was Governor Winthrop of Connecticut. However, the project of an alliance between French and English to crush the Iroquois came to naught, the main interest of the French being in the military aspect of the proposition, the English in the commercial. New France was left to face her ordeal alone, without help from the Mother Country which was then in the throes of the uprising of the Frende. She had to face it, too, with a man at the helm who proved to be one of the most incompetent governors it was ever her misfortune to experience. This was de Lauson who arrived in October 1651 to replace d'Ailleboust. Hitherto intendant of the Company in France, he was a trader and speculator in wild lands rather than a soldier and a man utterly unfit to lead in a dangerous crisis. His conduct was to make the French an object of contempt even to their own savage allies.

In 1651 the Iroquois turned their full weight against the French settlements. The handful of French at Villemarie, harassed almost ceaselessly, performed prodigies of valor[1] and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. But the Iroquois could replace their losses, while the little band at Villemarie steadily diminished. Only about fifty French remained. That the colony had survived so long was attributed to the "good management of Maisonneuve"[2] who obliged all families to leave their houses and withdraw into the fort. At Three Rivers the settlement "existed only through a miracle."[3] At Quebec, however, where the cannon seem to have inspired the

[1] "We have several times seen ten men of Villemarie, and less than that, confront fifty and eighty Iroquois, which has given the inhabitants of Montreal a great reputation throughout Canada and in France; and the Iroquois themselves have several times confessed that three men from Montreal inspired more fear in them than six from elsewhere." (Sister Morin, Annales de l'Hotel Dieu, St. Joseph, quoted in Faillon, op. cit., II, 118).

[2] Jesuit Relations, XXXVI, 165.

[3] Ibid., 167.

Iroquois with a lively fear all was peaceful.[1] Yet Quebec made no effort to aid her sorely pressed sister settlements. Here was revealed the great weakness of New France, the dispersion of the population. Three Rivers lay sixty miles upstream, Montreal one hundred and eighty from Quebec. Communication between the three posts, slow at best, was exceedingly difficult when Iroquois war parties lurked in ambush along the banks of the river. To make things still worse, one of Lauson's first acts had been to disband the "flying camp", the most effective weapon which the colony had yet devised to check Iroquois ravages. At Villemarie the thought uppermost in everyone's minds was how soon they could leave Canada. In desperation Maisonneuve determined to make a voyage to France to ask aid from the Montreal Associates since there appeared to be no prospect of help from any other quarter. He declared that unless he could obtain at least one hundred men, he would abandon the settlement.[2]

During the early summer of 1652 the Iroquois concentrated their attacks on the Indian allies of the French and left the St. Lawrence settlements in comparative peace. At the end of the summer, however, a band of Oneida and Mohawk appeared before Three Rivers. In a rash attempt to rescue two prisoners, M. Duplessis-Bochart, Governor of the post, and fifteen of his men were killed and seven captured. Fortunately the Iroquois did not take advantage of their victory but content with this success, retired, leaving the colonists to harvest their crops in peace. But the incident caused Iroquois insolence to rise dangerously, besides causing the loss to the French of a leader of no mean ability and a number of men in

(1 Marie de l'Incarnation, Lettres. Sept. 5, 1651. (Faillon, op. cit. II, 129).

(2 Ibid., 151.

a community where the population was already too small. French prestige, lowered by this defeat, was repaired somewhat in October when two hundred Iroquois were defeated at Villemarie with great loss by Major Lambert Closse and twenty-four Frenchmen, the colonists suffering only one killed and one wounded.

Throughout the spring of 1655 Villemarie and Three Rivers were subjected to continual Iroquois attacks which, however, did not meet with much success. Indicative of the almost complete lack of communication between Villemarie and Quebec is the report brought back by the crew of a barque, sent by de Lauson with orders not to land without certain proof that the colony was still in existence, that the French were no longer there. Unable to see through the fog any signs of life about the habitation, they had concluded that the colony had been wiped out. Perhaps this intelligence was not without influence in persuading de Lauson to re-establish the camp volant of fifty men under the command of Eustache Lambert. Towards the end of June came a ray of hope to lighten the despair which had settled upon the lonely outposts of Villemarie and Three Rivers. Sixty Onondaga appeared before the fort at Villemarie to treat for peace and through them the Oneida were induced to make peace overtures too. From the Oneida the colonists learned that a party of six hundred Mohawk was on the march against Villemarie, determined to wreak vengeance for the death of one of their greatest chiefs, Aouteriasti, who had been taken and burnt in the previous year by the savages of Three Rivers. The news proved true. One hundred of the band were detailed off to harass Villemarie and to prevent any aid from reaching Three Rivers, while the other five hundred blockaded the Fort, commanded in the absence of the Governor by Pierre Boucher. By a fortunate coincidence this body was

encountered by some thirty or forty French and Indians who had given chase to a band of Mohawk who had captured Father Poncet near Cap Rouge.(1 Abandoning the pursuit, they joined the garrison at Three Rivers after sending news to the Governor of the peril of the settlement. Meeting with heavy fire from the defenders, the Mohawk threw themselves on the cattle outside the fort and set fire to the corn standing in the fields. At this juncture the great Huron warrior chief, Annehotaha, arrived from Villemarie to propose peace, the only condition on which the Iroquois prisoners at Villemarie would be released. Unexpectedly the Mohawk agreed and peace was concluded in September at a council held at the Huron village on the Island of Orleans.

Soon after the conclusion of peace, which the French regarded only as temporary, the colony welcomed with an outpouring of joy and relief the arrival of Maisonneuve and the "great reinforcement" of one hundred and five men, young, robust, courageous, and capable of bearing arms. They had been engaged by the Company of Montreal at its own expense for five years after which time they were to be free to return to France or take up land in the colony. Lauson did his best to keep the reinforcement at Quebec and when Maisonneuve was adamant, he refused him barques to convey the new settlers to Villemarie. That Maisonneuve was able to assemble such a company prepared to brave the perils and hardships of life at the frontier outpost of Villemarie would seem to indicate that it was not the Iroquois menace which was preventing immigration from France. The reason is probably to be found in the poverty of the colony through the

(1 The title of the grant to Louis de Lauson of the Cap Rouge seigneury, dated Nov. 15, 1653, declares that "The continual incursions of the Iroquois appearing daily to the habitants of Cap Rouge, where they have committed several massacres and carried off a number of inhabitants, the few houses which there are remain abandoned." (Sulte, Histoire, III, 39).

stoppage of trade consequent upon the Huron collapse. With the colonists deprived of many necessities of life, even of European clothing, through disruption of the trade, it was not to be expected that funds would be available for bringing out more settlers at the expense of the Company of Habitants.

Marie de l'Incarnation declared in 1655 that the colony pursued its way gropingly, that there was continually talk of leaving the country, but at the same time more lands were being taken and cleared, houses built and the population was increasing. This growth of population must have been due largely to natural increase and probably to a certain extent to private initiative. Sulte[1] estimates the population of New France in the summer of 1655 at a little over one thousand, of which about one third was "floating", including under this designation traders, interpreters, priests and their households. The fixed population he divides as follows - Quebec four hundred, Three Rivers one hundred and seventy-five, Montreal ninety to one hundred.

From the arrival of the reinforcement of 1655, the most numerous and best selected which had yet been sent, dates the solid establishment of the colony at Villemarie which had hitherto been a military outpost rather than a colony, the fort having been the usual abode of the settlers owing to the Iroquois wars. Many of the men who arrived in 1653 stayed in the colony after the expiration of their five years service and Maisonneuve facilitated their settlement by offering land and a bounty sufficient to build and furnish a house to those who would establish themselves at Villemarie. By 1659 about forty houses had been constructed, situated close together for purposes of defence. Their heads were armed soldiers

[1 Sulte, op. cit., III, 51.

who now had the added incentive of defending their own hearths. This arrangement resulted in a transformation in the appearance of the colony. The fort now housed only the Governor, the commandant and men of the garrison and a few other persons. As a means of protection it had outlived its usefulness, having been superseded by the fortified houses and the redoubts constructed in the fields to protect the workers as they went about their daily tasks.(1 The new system made possible more attention to the cultivation of the land and the colony was thereby rendered less dependent than heretofore on the supplies from France.

The progress of Villemarie was greatly facilitated by the lull in Iroquois hostilities resulting from the "peace" which lasted approximately four years.(2 The Iroquois were not long in revealing the motives which prompted this unexpected move. The unremitting and large scale warfare of the past five years had seriously thinned their ranks, despite the wholesale adoption of captives. The flourishing Huron settlement on the Isle of Orleans was both an affront to the victors of 1649-50 and a tempting prize, a potential source of strength to the Five Nations if its inhabitants could be lured away from their French friends and assimilated into the confederacy of the Five Nations. The Mohawk who brought back Father Poncet in November 1653 and the Onondaga who came in February 1654 with presents to cement the peace both made secret overtures to the Hurons of the island to join their captured kinsmen among the Five Nations. In an effort to escape the trap the Hurons begged that the project be de-

(1 Faillon, op. cit., II, 192.

(2 In the summer of 1654 it was extended to include the Seneca, Oneida and Cayuga. The war undertaken against the Eries in this year was another factor disposing the Five Nations to peace with the French. Sporadic attacks on the French settlements occurred, however, during the autumn of 1654 and the following spring, the outcome of the lack of concert among the Iroquois tribes on the subject of peace and war which so often perplexed and harassed their foes.

ferred for a year during which time the Iroquois who had asked for a French settlement in their midst should build a house for the missionaries. Then they would follow willingly. For two years de Lauson temporized and evaded his promise to send French settlers to the Iroquois country, contenting himself with the visit of Father Le Moyne to the Onondaga in 1654 and to the Mohawk in 1655, and of Fathers Dablon and Chaumonot to the Onondaga in 1655. The impatient Onondaga threatened at a council of the nation in February 1656 to break the peace if the French did not carry out their promises. Accompanied by an Onondaga embassy, Dablon returned to Quebec on this business in the early spring of this year. The issue had to be faced at once.

The Governor was in an agony of indecision which was not diminished by the bitter and open rivalry between Onondaga and Mohawk. Each of these nations was determined to secure for itself the Huron prize. Even while the Governor and Jesuits were pondering on the news brought by Dablon, the Mohawk to the number of three hundred were on the march against the Isle of Orleans with the intention of carrying off the Hurons forcibly. Finally with much misgiving it was decided to comply with the demands of the Onondaga. The deciding consideration seems to have been that refusal or delay to take up the proposal would be followed by "the total ruin of New France, which, after being reduced to extremities by a single nation,[1] could not long withstand the efforts of five together if they conspired against her."[2] It was a counsel of despair. On May 17, 1656 about fifty French and a few Hurons under the command of Dupuys, an officer of the garrison at Quebec,

[1] The Mohawk had hitherto been chiefly responsible for the attacks on New France.

[2] Le Mercier to the Provincial of the Society in Paris, June 6, 1656. (Kenton, op. cit., 284)

set out with the Onondaga deputies. Unknown to the Iroquois, de Lauson had granted to the Jesuits one hundred square leagues of land in the heart of their country, being unable even in a crisis such as this to refrain from exercising his favorite prerogative.

The hollowness of the peace with the Mohawk and the tension between them and the Onondaga were soon revealed. On May 18 the Mohawk fell upon the canoes straggling in the wake of the shallops bearing the French settlers to Onnontague. Two leagues above Montreal the Onondaga retaliated by pillaging some Mohawk canoes. At daybreak on March 20 the Mohawk, who had slipped past Quebec unobserved, landed on the Isle of Orleans and spreading through the settlement, suddenly appeared before the Hurons as they came out to work in the fields. Seventy-one men, women and children were killed or carried off as captives, the Mohawk parading their prisoners boldly before Quebec while the Governor and the inhabitants looked on helplessly. Having by his peculation and supineness made himself thoroughly unpopular in the colony, Lauson soon after this incident anticipated his recall and sailed for France leaving his son, Charles de Lauson-Charny, in command.

The prestige of the French sank still lower under the younger de Lauson than it had under his father. After the Mohawk attack of May 1656 the Hurons had fled to Quebec. Feeling abandoned by the French they offered themselves to the Mohawk in a moment of despair and in the autumn of the year the latter accorded them peace on condition that in the following spring they would join them. The time having come, the Mohawk came to fetch them and spoke insolently to Lauson-Charny in council. The Bear tribe of the Hurons decided to go with the Mohawk, the Rock tribe to the number of fifty accompanied the Onondaga, while the Rope clan refused to leave the

French. In August 1657 twenty Mohawk appeared at Quebec to take away the rest of the Hurons, some of whom went with them followed soon after by Father Le Moyne. At the beginning of September fifty Onondaga appeared at Quebec with the same design and when the Hurons consented to go in the following spring agreed, but to be sure that their prey did not escape, they passed the winter near Quebec. The hopes of the French to win over the Onondaga by the establishment of a colony in their midst were soon dashed. Commercial considerations and the jealousy existing between the Upper Nations and the Mohawk might have been sufficient to induce the former to keep the peace if they had had a high opinion of the strength of the French. Unfortunately, however, their visits to Quebec merely revealed to them the weakness of the French. The missionaries who knew the savage mind better than anyone else were well aware that under the circumstances the establishment at Onnontagué could only be temporary. Indeed as soon as the French settlers were in their power the Onondaga became more insolent and the band remaining near Quebec committed numerous acts of brigandage. Meanwhile, Lauson-Charny, anxious to be relieved of his difficult position, had asked d'Ailleboust, the former governor, to take charge of the government until the arrival of the new governor, M. d'Argenson. D'Ailleboust consenting, he sailed for France on September 16, 1657.

With d'Ailleboust at the helm French policy took on a note of firmness which had been missing for the past six years. When news arrived at Quebec of the maltreatment of the Hurons who had gone with the Onondaga in July, a council was called and protection offered to the Algonkin and Hurons. A fort was built for them on a height of land beside the Chateau St. Louis. For the safety of the habitants redoubts were constructed in the fields as had been done at Villemarie.

War broke out again towards the end of the year 1657. In October a band of thirty Oneida, after having been received as friends, treacherously slew three colonists at Villemarie. In retaliation Maisonneuve seized and held as prisoners as many Iroquois as he could lay hands on and having been informed of this move, d'Ailleboust followed suit. An Onondaga and a Mohawk were despatched to their respective nations to inform them of what had happened. At the beginning of the year 1658 three Mohawk ambassadors arrived at Quebec, demanding insolently the release of their compatriots. D'Ailleboust, after assembling the French, Hurons and Algonkin, upbraided and defied them. Meanwhile in the month of February a secret council of the Five Nations was held at Agnié at which it was decided to wage a war of extermination against the French as soon as the Iroquois prisoners had been recovered. The fact that fifty Onondaga had remained at Quebec to see that the Hurons did not escape them was the salvation of the Gannentae settlement, because the Onondaga were awaiting their return before turning on their guests. Dupuys was able to evacuate his little company safely and arrived at Villemarie on April 5, 1658. The flight of the Onondaga colony perhaps settled the destiny of one of the greatest communities of the modern world. Six years later, without striking a blow, the Dutch lost this country to the weak England of Charles II instead of the strong France of Louis XIV.

At the end of May, 1658, the Mohawk brought back Father Le Moyne and in June returned to their own country, after failing to secure the release of their captive fellows at Quebec. From then on there were almost daily hostilities. The new Governor, M. d'Argenson, arrived on July 11. On the following day news was brought that the Iroquois had just carried off two Algonkin women and their children in front of the

fort. The Iroquois were obviously becoming bolder. Although the French colony had grown considerably, its strength fell far short of what was necessary to reduce the enemy to submission. The bulk of the population was more accustomed to wielding the hoe than the sword. According to d'Argenson in 1658 they were only one hundred and sixty men at Quebec capable of bearing arms.(1 The proud soldier chafed under the necessity of having to endure Iroquois insolence and made urgent representations to France for aid to chastise them for their contumacy. But no help was yet forthcoming from that quarter, while the poverty of the colony was such that he could scarcely expect any further support there.(2 Under the circumstances all he could do was to remain on the defensive and retain in the dungeons of the Chateau St. Louis twenty-one of the most important Mohawk warriors in the hope that their confinement would act as a deterrent to their countrymen. In 1659, however, they escaped and affairs were in the same state as before the peace.

Meanwhile Villemarie had been experiencing almost daily attacks since October 1657 which had rendered the cultivation of the fields well nigh impossible. There would have been a scarcity of food had not provisions been received from d'Argenson on his arrival in 1658 and from the Montreal Associates, who in 1659 sent out another hundred colonists. In two and one half years of almost continual hostilities (October 1657 to April 1660) Villemarie lost only one man, thanks to the wise rule of Maisonneuve who kept the colonists under arms at all times and would allow them to venture into the fields only in a body. Montreal was im-

(1 Faillon, op. cit., II, 379.

(2 Ibid., p. 380. "You cannot imagine the high cost of food, besides the difficulty of procuring it. The habitants are extremely poor and all in debt to the merchants." (Letters of d'Argenson).

deed the hope of New France. The armed forces of Three Rivers were scarcely sufficient to defend the immediate approaches to the post. Though the settlement at Quebec was numerically the strongest in the colony, the settlers were too dispersed, at Sillery, on the Isle of Orleans, and on the various seigneuries, to be able to defend themselves effectively. At Montreal, on the other hand, there was close grouping and in addition at the head of the colony a man of energy and experience who was at the same time a soldier feared by the Iroquois. It was from Villemarie in April 1660 that Dollard and his gallant band set out to make their heroic stand which turned aside perhaps the most menacing threat which New France had yet faced.

In 1659 an escaped Huron prisoner warned that a powerful army was being gathered in the Iroquois country to make a supreme effort to annihilate the French. In May 1660 a dying Iroquois prisoner revealed that hundreds of Iroquois were already on the way to attack Quebec in fulfilment of a vow that 1660 should see the final ruin of the French. A large army of warriors was to gather near Villemarie, while far up the Ottawa a large band of warriors who had spent the winter hunting in the Algonkin country was waiting for the break-up of the ice in order to join them and descend on the French settlements. There was universal alarm. Country houses were abandoned and the inhabitants sought refuge in the fort which, depending largely on the produce of the countryside, was incapable of withstanding a long siege, owing to food scarcity. Quebec waited in suspense and fear, but the foe did not appear. Why ? That is the story of the feat of Dollard and his companions at the Long Sault.

The colonists of Villemarie had hitherto been content to remain on the defensive, but in April 1660, Dollard des Ormeaux, the young commandant of the garrison decided to take the offensive and set out with a

small band of colonists with the idea of attacking and defeating isolated Iroquois parties, so as to restore confidence and security to the settlers and at the same time raise French prestige among the Iroquois who had interpreted as weakness the cautious defensive tactics hitherto pursued. In a brisk encounter with an Iroquois raiding party on Nun's Island near Villemarie on April 19 the invaders were defeated but Dollard lost three of his fifteen companions, two of whom were drowned and the other killed in the skirmish. Returning to Villemarie he made up his party to seventeen and plentifully supplied with munitions of war, directed his course up stream in the hope of intercepting Iroquois hunting parties coming down the Ottawa. Unaccustomed to the handling of the canoe, the French had considerable difficulty in negotiating the swift water at the western end of the Island, but on May 1 arrived at the foot of the Long Sault on the Ottawa, eight or ten leagues above Montreal and just below the Chaudière Rapids.

Finding there a small redoubt constructed in the previous year by a party of Algonkin, Dollard and his companions took possession. They were joined shortly by forty Hurons under chief Annohotaha and four Algonkin who, arriving at Villemarie shortly after Dollard's departure, had followed him and now sought to be admitted to his party. Soon after two canoes were seen approaching which proved to be the advance guard of the two hundred Iroquois who had spent the winter hunting in Algonkin territory and were now on their way to join five hundred of their fellows in a concerted attack on the French settlements. On landing they were attacked by Dollard and his companions but some escaped to carry the news back to the main body. On the approach of this unexpectedly large party,

Dollard and his party retired to their rude fort, in their haste leaving their kettles slung over the fires on the bank. While the Iroquois were building a retrenchment opposite the fort, the French and their allies worked feverishly to strengthen their own defences. The stage was set for one of the most heroic feats in Canadian history.

The Iroquois, repulsed repeatedly, sent for help to their five hundred allies who were awaiting them at the mouth of the Richelieu. In the little fort the French and their Indian companions, without water, were beginning to be oppressed by thirst. Several attempts were made under cover of fire from the fort to get water from the river two hundred feet away, but having lost their kettles, they had only small vessels and could not bring much at a time. A pit dug within the fort yielded only a small amount of muddy water. Under these circumstances, when the Iroquois invited the Hurons to join them promising them their lives, all but the gallant chief deserted to the enemy and Dollard was left to continue the fight with his sixteen Frenchmen, one Huron and four Algonkin. On the fifth day of the siege the expected reinforcement of five hundred Iroquois arrived. In an assault on the fort they were driven back with great loss and for three more days attacked repeatedly without success. The defenders, reeling with exhaustion and parched with thirst, fought and prayed and fought again. The Iroquois, unable to make headway, debated for some time whether or not they should raise the siege which was costing them so dear, but having found out from the treacherous Hurons the small number of defenders, decided as a matter of honour to conquer or perish in the attempt. The whole troop then advanced to the attack behind a small group of volunteers and after a desperate resistance Dollard and his little company were overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers. Endeavouring to throw

over the palisade among the attackers a crude grenade, Dollard in his weakness was unable to accomplish his purpose and the explosive fell back among the defenders. In the confusion which followed the Iroquois made a breach in the stockade. The surviving French with knife and sword fought with the fury of men possessed until the Iroquois drew off and firing volley after volley mowed them down. When all was over, three just breathing were dragged out from the pile of corpses and burned on the spot. One who was not mortally wounded was carried off to torture. The Iroquois then turned on the treacherous Hurons to vent on them their rage and humiliation. Five escaped to carry their version of the affair to Villemarie. The Iroquois losses had been so heavy, almost one third of their number, that they abandoned the projected attack on the French settlements and returned to their villages to nurse their wounded and plan condign vengeance.

Though the heroic sacrifice of Dollard and his companions did not end the danger, it did ward off from a famishing and unprepared colony devastating hordes of Iroquois bent on destroying it, and enabled defensive measures to be taken against their return. It was eight months before the Iroquois returned to carry out their threat. In the meantime Maisonneuve put the defences of Villemarie in order and sent news of the deed at the Long Sault to Three Rivers and Quebec. Adopting the defensive system of Villemarie, d'Argenson at Quebec ordered all heads of families living in the country to build a retreat inside the redoubts, eight or nine "closed" villages being thus established, and to contribute to the erection of common barns to hold the fruits of the harvest. Knowing that even these precautions would not save the colonists from famine in the event of a long siege, he despatched a vessel to France with the request that it be sent back the same

year laden with flour. At this critical juncture, when Marie de l'Incarnation reports that the Company of New France was on the point of abandoning the country, Radisson and Groseilliers arrived with sixty Ottawa canoes from the west bringing furs which were sorely needed to help rehabilitate the finances of New France.

As had been anticipated, in the autumn six hundred Iroquois came to ravage the colony. However, taking it as an ill omen when one of their chiefs was killed in a deer hunt, the army returned home and the French were able to harvest their crops without which they would have faced starvation. Again d'Argenson sent urgent representations to the court on the necessity of sending troops if the colony and with it the Catholic faith in North America was to be preserved. The Jesuit Relation of 1660 struck the same note and Le Jeune was sent in the following year to give personal expression to the needs of the colony. Peace had been concluded with Spain after twenty-five years of hostilities and there was reason to hope that aid would now be immediately forthcoming. The realization of this hope, however, was to be deferred for five years more. In the meantime New France had to withstand the most determined onslaught yet directed against her.

At the beginning of 1661 the Mohawk took the field to avenge the humiliating check of the previous year. Their ravages extended all the way from Montreal to above Tadoussac and took a toll of more than one hundred French killed or taken captive. At Three Rivers and Villemarie the colonists saw their compatriots snatched away to death or captivity almost at their very gates. Around Quebec the Iroquois ravaged the Isle of Orleans whence most of the inhabitants had fled. Among their victims was the Seneschal, Jean de Lauson, son of the former governor. To heighten the misery, the crops could not be harvested and by the middle of 1662 there was an acute shortage of wheat. In September d'Argenson surrendered

his onerous charge to his successor, the Baron d'Avaugour. Deeply chagrined at the Company's neglect of the colony and by the impossibility of sustaining the settlement and paying the public officers, he had in the second year of his term demanded to be recalled, alleging ill health, and would have returned to France sooner if there had been any one after the death of M. d'Ailleboust to whom he could have confided the government. D'Avaugour, after making a tour of inspection through the colony, asked his retiring predecessor to tell the King that if he did not receive aid in the course of the following year he would return to France without waiting for his recall. He wrote to the king himself and in 1662 sent Pierre Boucher, Commandant at Three Rivers, to report to the Queen Mother on the country, its needs and its possibilities.(1 The king promised to send a regiment in the following year. Meantime M. de Mons was named Commissioner to inspect the colony and to carry out the royal orders. Between three and four hundred men were sent with him to reinforce the garrisons.

Before these reinforcements arrived, however, New France had to face another Iroquois siege and a bitter and unseemly conflict between Governor and Bishop over the brandy question. Villemarie was the principal theatre of the war, which continued despite attempts by Garakontie, an Onondaga chief favourable to the French, to bring about peace. Through the efforts of Garakontie, eighteen French captives and Father Le Moyne were returned at the end of August 1662. The fury and frequency of Iroquois attacks forced Maisonneuve to take further measures for defence and to assure the colony of a food supply. Soldiers and domestics were per-

(1 Boucher in a letter mentioned meeting several persons in France who had left Canada because of the war. (Sulte, Histoire, III, 71).

mitted to clear lands on the domain of the Seigneurs and if they cleared four arpents they might trade with the savages as did the habitants. On these conditions sixty-two took up land. There was always ready at hand a "flying camp", a corps of brave soldiers, prepared to sally out and protect the workers in the fields. So successful were these measures that from the month of June 1662 to the summer of 1665 when the troops promised by the King finally arrived Maisonneuve had lost only ten men, eight of whom were killed and two taken captive. At the beginning of 1663 the colonists were organized into the "Militia of the Holy Family", twenty bands of seven, headed by a corporal elected by the majority vote, and enrolled in the garrison. Redoubts were constructed in the fields and guarded day and night. The colonists were ordered to cut down all trees on the lands of their grants to prevent the Iroquois from taking cover there.

Quebec, more fortunate than Villemarie, was left in peace and the colonists were able to cultivate their fields in safety.(1 But though during 1662-5 Quebec was comparatively free from the Iroquois menace, she did not escape the disorders consequent upon the dispute between the headstrong and irritable d'Avaugour and the masterful Bishop Laval. In February 1663 an earthquake rocked the settlement and sent French and Indians scurrying to the churches in a passion of repentance. In this month, though the colonists knew it not, the second troubled chapter in the history of New France was closed and another opened when the Company of New France handed the country back to the king and New France became a royal province.

The year which saw the turning point in the history of New France found the Five Nations once more disposed to peace. Mohawk and Oneida had

(1 Faillon, op. cit., III, 85.

had suffered a serious reverse at the hands of the Sauteurs in the previous year, while the three other nations were again on the defensive against the Andastes. The Onondaga even asked for the return of the French to their old settlement among them and offered to send some of their girls to be instructed by the Ursulines and to serve as hostages for their good behaviour. While these matters were under consideration news was spread by a Huron, now a naturalised Iroquois, that thousands of men had disembarked at Quebec and that the French were on the point of falling upon the Iroquois with all their forces and destroying them utterly. There was an element of truth in this, for M. de Mezy had arrived with troops to relieve d'Avaugour and with him came the Sieur Gaudais to take possession of the country in the name of the king.

There can be little doubt that the Iroquois wars were the primary cause of this change of French policy which ended the rule of the trading company in New France and brought the colony under the vigorous direction of Louis XIV, then on the threshhold of his long and eventful reign. If New France was to be preserved for the Most Christian King, the colonists could no longer be ignored and the reign of the contumacious Iroquois must be brought to an end. The colony had long ceased to be a profitable investment for the Company of New France, for the Iroquois wars had dried up most of the springs of the trade, and so there was little opposition on the part of the Company to the restoration of the land to the king.

Missions 1645-65

"These churches were born amid crosses ; they have begotten their children amid sufferings, persecutions, epidemics, famines and wars ; they have fed on tears and anguish."

The hopes raised by the peace concluded in 1645 were destined soon to be dashed and the trials of the past twelve years to seem as nothing compared with the disasters of the next decade. The Jesuits were to see their most promising efforts brought to naught, their dreams of an empire of native Christians dispelled forever by the hatchets and the guns of the Iroquois.

This calamity could not be foreseen when in May 1646 Father Jogues accompanied by the engineer Bourdon left Villemarie on a visit, half political, half religious, to the country of the Mohawk. He was not only to be the bearer of gifts and messages from the Governor, but he was also to found a new mission, christened in advance with a prophetic name, the "Mission of the Martyrs." Heeding the advice of an Algonkin convert to wear secular garb and to say nothing about the Faith at first, Jogues exchanged his cassock for a civilian's doublet and contented himself with offering in the name of the Governor gifts and messages of peace which called forth the unanimous applause of the Mohawk assembly, a strange contrast, surely, to the reception accorded him here less than four years before. The business of the embassy was scarcely finished when the Mohawk counselled him and his companion to return home with all despatch lest, if they lingered, they should encounter on the way warriors of the Oneida and Onondaga who had not entered into the treaty of peace. Therefore after making a round of the village, confessing and instructing the few Christian Hurons remaining and baptizing several dying Mohawk, he set out with Bourdon on the homeward path and arrived safely at Fort

Richelieu on the 27th of June.

In July at a council of the Jesuits held at Quebec it was decided that the Mission of the Martyrs should be temporarily abandoned, but for some reason which is not apparent Jogues was ordered in September to his dangerous post. At the end of the month he set out with a young, Lalande, and three or four Hurons. Warned by Indians on the way of a change of feeling in the Mohawk towns, the Hurons turned back, but not so Jogues and his young French companion. Arriving in the Mohawk country they were seized and abused like prisoners. On the night of October 18, as the Father bent his head to enter a cabin whither he had been invited to a feast, an Iroquois concealed within cleft his skull with a hatchet. On the following day Lalande met a similar fate. The Mission of the Martyrs had received its baptism of blood.

What had happened in the intervening months to cause this change of heart among the Mohawk ? On his departure in June the Father, meaning to return, had left behind a small chest containing his few personal belongings. When disease attacked the village and caterpillars destroyed the crops the superstitious natives, at the instigation of captive Hurons trying to curry favour with their masters, ascribed their misfortunes to magic emanating from the box. The Bear clan, overriding the objections of the Wolf and Tortoise clans, declared for war on the French. The death of the first Jesuit martyr of New France was the signal for the resumption of hostilities. Thereafter the war was waged on the St. Lawrence more fiercely than before. In 1645 Pieskaret, most famous of the Algonkin chiefs, was killed by treachery. Again the Algonkin tribes left the French settlements to seek in the forests refuge from the fury of an enemy who now spared neither age nor sex. The Jesuits would not despair,

though forced thus to witness the ruin of their cherished scheme of Algonkin settlement. On the contrary, they went further afield. At Tadoussac a successful summer mission had been established. Journeying up the Saguenay in 1646 Father du Quen found evidences among the Porcupine nation that the teachings at Tadoussac had borne fruit. In August 1646 a new field of missionary labour was opened when Father Druillettes left Sillery to work among the Abnakis of the Kennebec region. Among these savages the Faith found a ready acceptance and though nominally subjects of New England they became staunch allies of France and the Church, a fact of great significance in later years when they became one of the principal bulwarks of New France against the Iroquois and the English.

Meanwhile the Upper Nations had continued to wage a bloody war against the Hurons, destroying their frontier villages and keeping others in a state of perpetual alarm. The Arendaenronnon clan on the eastern frontier had met with so many reverses at the hands of the enemy that it was compelled to seek refuge in other more populous and more easily defended villages.(1 The Faith, however, spread vigorously in the midst of this affliction. Forty-five French and eighteen Fathers were now in the Huron country serving eleven missions, eight Huron and three Algonkin.(2

In the year 1647 negotiations were opened with the Onondaga and embassies were exchanged also with the Oneida and Cayuga. In April envoys were sent to the Andastes, asking them to put pressure on the Iroquois to enter into a full peace or to resume the war which they had a few years previously been waging against the Mohawk. With Andaste help considerable progress was made in negotiations with the Onondaga. The Seneca, however, would not hear of peace and in this they were now supported by the Mohawk.

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXXIII, 81.
(2 Ibid., 75.

Hostile bands threatened the whole country and kept the Hurons from going down to trade.

The following year was fraught with portents of disaster, though the progress of the Faith was uninterrupted. Famine lay heavy on the land and nearly six thousand savages partook of the hospitality of the residence of Ste. Marie, which was now almost self supporting. Then on July 4th the Iroquois descended on two villages on the southeastern frontier, left almost denuded of their men who were away on the war path or trading. One of these was St. Joseph (Teanostaea), a town of two thousand inhabitants and one of the principal missions, where the Faith had taken deep root. In the holocaust probably seven hundred souls, mostly women and children, were killed or taken captive.(1 Here fell the second Jesuit martyr of the Huron mission, Father Antoine Daniel, who had refused to desert his flock.

After the disaster of St. Joseph an apathy of despair settled on the Hurons. Sunk in dejection, fearing everything yet taking no measures for defence, like a doomed people, they waited for the next blow to fall. Common vigilance and common sense would have averted the calamities which followed, but neither by counsel nor exhortation could the Jesuits arouse them to face the danger.

Meanwhile, in the autumn of 1648 over a thousand warriors, chiefly Mohawk and Seneca, had set out on the warpath against the Hurons. They progressed leisurely, hunting in the forests throughout the winter. The destruction of the two frontier towns of the mission of St. Joseph had left a wide gap on the eastern frontier of the Hurons and in the middle of March the enemy entered undiscovered into the heart of the Huron country after travelling over snow and ice nearly two hundred leagues. About nine o'clock

(1 Jesuit Relations, XXXIII, 99.

of the morning of March 16, 1649, the French at Ste. Marie observed towards the southeast, about three miles away, a cloud of smoke and soaring flames. The Iroquois had struck again. Just before dawn they had approached the fortified town of St. Ignace whose four hundred inhabitants, chiefly women, children and old men, were sleeping in blissful ignorance of the awful doom that was hanging over their heads. Entering by the weakest side of the palisade, the Iroquois burst in upon them and in a few minutes all was over. Many were slaughtered on the spot; the rest were reserved for a worse fate. Only three escaped to give the alarm at St. Louis about a league distant. Here all the inhabitants who had strength to escape, with the exception of about eighty warriors, fled in wildest terror for a place of safety. The warriors determined to hold the place to the last. With them remained the two Fathers of the mission, Brébeuf and Lalemant who refused the entreaties of their converts to escape with them and stayed behind to cheer on those who fought and administer the last rites of the Church to those who fell. Scarcely had the fugitives departed when the Iroquois arrived. The handful of Hurons put up a desperate resistance but were overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers. The survivors were captured with the priests and the village set on fire; the helpless wretches who remained, unable to flee, were consumed in their burning dwellings.

At Ste. Marie the French waited, wracked with suspense, trembling for Brébeuf and Lalemant and in hourly expectation of attack. They had not long to wait. In the evening Iroquois scouting parties were seen prowling along the edge of the bordering forest, reconnoitring in preparation for making an attack. In the morning about three hundred Huron warriors, chiefly converts from Ossossané, arrived on the scene and encountering the vanguard of two hundred Iroquois on the way to begin the attack on

Ste. Marie, defeated them with great loss. Behind the ruined palisades of St. Louis the gallant band of Hurons awaited the coming of the main body of the Iroquois. Though hopelessly outnumbered by a foe armed mostly with guns, of which they had few, the Hurons fought with a reckless ferocity far into the night. It was only after the loss of one hundred of their best warriors that the Iroquois prevailed. But victory had been bought so dear that a sudden panic fell upon them and they beat a hasty retreat, leaving many of their captives bound to stakes in the burning cabins of St. Ignace. Before they went, however, they found time to put to death, after savage tortures too revolting to bear describing, the two Jesuits, Lalemant and Brébeuf whose mangled remains discovered three days later by a party of French from Ste. Marie bore eloquenttestimony to the horrible fate of the two martyrs.

The fall of St.Ignace and St. Louis sounded the death knell of the Huron nation. Crazed with terror they could think only of flight. Within two weeks after the disasters of St. Ignace and St. Louis fifteen Huron towns were abandoned and the greater number burned, their inhabitants scattering in the woods and forests, on the lakes and rivers and among the islands most unknown to the enemy, or seeking refuge among the neighboring Petuns and Neutrals. The Hurons as a nation ceased to exist. Sainte Marie had been built as a base for the mission. Its occupation was now gone and its existence had no longer an object. With sorrowful hearts the Jesuits faced the necessity of abandoning the habitation. Certain of the Fathers were told off to make itinerant missions among the fugitives on the islands and north shore of Lake Huron. The rest took council together as to where they should go and where should be the new seat of the mission. After considerable deliberation, Manitoulin Island near the north shore of Lake

Huron was decided upon, partly because it would give ready access to the numerous Algonkin tribes along the borders of the lake, partly because it was conveniently situated with respect to the Ottawa trade route. Scarcely had this resolve been taken when twelve chiefs came with news that many of the Hurons had determined to reunite on the neighboring Christian Island (called by the Jesuits Isle St. Joseph), and begged the Fathers to join them there. The Jesuits allowed themselves to be persuaded to change their plans. Ste. Marie was stripped of everything that could be moved and on the 14th of June set on fire lest it should harbor the Iroquois. With heavy hearts the Fathefs watched the flames consume in an hour the results of nine or ten years of toil.

About three hundred families, mostly Christians, were bivouacked on Christian Island when the Fathers landed several days later with some forty soldiers, laborers and others. At once began the work of establishing a new settlement. New homes were hewn out of the primeval forests and land cleared for cultivation. Meanwhile the French labored assiduously on the construction of a square, bastioned fort of solid masonry with walls about twelve feet high. Within were a small chapel and houses for the French. The island escaped the attacks of the Iroquois this summer though their scalping parties ranged over the neighboring mainland. As winter drew near great numbers of Huron fugitives converged on Christian Island until between six and eight thousand were gathered in over a hundred bark cabins around the French fort. Not one family in ten had been able to devote itself to the cultivation of the soil and a severe famine ensued, taking a great toll of life which would have been even greater but for the assistance the Jesuits were able to give with the supplies of corn and livestock brought from Ste.Marie. "All the days and nights of winter

were but nights of horror passed in constant fear and expectation of a hostile party of Iroquois, of whom tidings had been received; these (it was said) were to come to us to sweep this Island and to exterminate, with us, the remnants of a nation drawing to its end."[1]

Three hundred Iroquois were indeed ravaging the mainland, irresolute whether to turn their arms against the remnant of the Huron nation on Christian Island or against the Tobacco Nation. Receiving this information from two Christian Hurons who had escaped from the band, the French put their defences in order and sent warnings to the Petuns. These awaited the enemy for several days, then, tired of waiting, a band from the principal town of St. Jean set out to meet them. But the wily Iroquois took an unexpected circuitous route and learning of the defenceless state of the village from a Petun and his squaw captured on the way, appeared before the gates of the town towards three o'clock in the afternoon of December 7. Those of the inhabitants who could fled; many were killed incontinent. Then the invaders, fearing the return of the warriors, killed all the old men, children and others whom they deemed unable to sustain the pace of the retreat, and fired the bark cabins. On the following morning a scouting party from the neighboring town of St. Matthias visited the scene of the carnage. Among the blackened corpses of the slain they found the scarce recognizable body of Father Charles Garnier, who, refusing to flee, had been slain while performing the duties of his office. Two days after the massacre the warriors returned. In a horror too deep for words at the sight of the ashes and the dead bodies of their relatives, their wives and their children, they maintained for half the day a profound silence, seated, after the manner of savages, upon the ground, without lifting their eyes or uttering even a

[1 Jesuit Relations, XXXV, 91.

sigh - like marble statues, without speech, without sight, and without motion."[1

Father Noel Chabanel, Garnier's colleague in the mission of St. Jean, had left him only two days before the massacre in accordance with orders from the Superior, Father Ragueneau, who thought it needless to expose the life of more than one priest in a position of such danger. On the way to Christian Island he disappeared. Some time afterwards it was discovered that he had been murdered by an apostate Huron out of hatred for the Faith which in his savage mind was responsible for the ruin of the Hurons. The death of Chabanel brought to five the number of Fathers of the Huron mission who had perished within two years. The number of Hurons who perished in the cataclysm, through war and the accompanying scourges of disease and famine, was never estimated but must have been enormous.

From their base on Christian Island certain of the Fathers were sent among the Huron fugitives on the north shore of Lake Huron. Others established the mission of the Holy Ghost among the Algonkin tribes along the shores of the lake, sharing the wretched nomadic life of these people. The others remained on the Island to minister to its miserable inhabitants among whom an epidemic had appeared to aid the work of famine and war. By spring the Hurons, reduced now to about half their original number, were faced with the necessity of choosing between an assured death from hunger or a probable death at the hands of the Iroquois who were again on the track of their prey. They chose the latter alternative and early in March parties began to leave the Island and cross to the mainland for fishing. Some of them never reached the shore, breaking through the treacherous ice on the lake. Other parties more fortunate gained the shore safely and began

[1 Jesuit Relations XXXV, 117-19.

their fishing. But the Iroquois were in wait for them. A large band of warriors had already made its way across two hundred leagues of ice and snow to fall upon the Huron camps. The Iroquois pursued the fugitives with such a vindictive fury and persistence that only one escaped to report the loss to the few who remained on Christian Island. On receipt of the news two old chiefs came to the fort and asked for an interview with Raguenesu and his companions. They reported that their people had resolved to leave the island and scatter in the remote forests and suggested that the Fathers might save them, if they would, by transporting those who remained to the shelter of the fort at distant Quebec. After much soul searching on the part of the Fathers it was decided to grant the petition of the chiefs and the resolution once taken, preparations for the departure were pushed forward with all speed.

On the 10th of June the Jesuits abandoned the Huron mission and with all their French followers and some three hundred Hurons set out on the long voyage to Quebec. It was a journey of three hundred leagues through a land which two years before had been dotted with populous tribes, now a waste of death and desolation with the hand of the Iroquois everywhere apparent. On the shores of Lake Nipissing they found nothing save the ashes of burnt wigwams which told only too well the fate of their hapless occupants. The Ottawa River was a solitude, the Algonkin tribes who had previously inhabited its shores having been broken and dispersed. After a most distressing journey of fifty days Raguenesu and his party arrived at Quebec, for the Hurons had refused to remain at Montreal in a spot so exposed to the enemy. About one hundred of the sufferers were taken care of by the Hospital Nuns, the Ursulines and some of the more prominent citizens. The Jesuits themselves had to shoulder the burden of supporting the remainder until arrangements could be completed to establish them on the Island of Orleans. With the

Huron mission destroyed there was no longer sufficient means of livelihood or employment for all of the Fathers and in 1650 eight of them returned to France, leaving behind nineteen or twenty to carry out pastoral duties in the settlements and missionary labours among the scattered Algonkin tribes of the Lower St. Lawrence region.

About three hundred Hurons had accompanied Ragueneau to Quebec, but what of the remainder ? None were left alive in their ancient domains. Some had remained on Christian Island, promising to follow the missionaries down to Quebec at the end of the summer. The arrival of a party of Iroquois on the island very effectually prevented them from carrying out this plan. Thirty of the enemy landed on the island and erected a fort from which they sallied out to massacre and take captives at the very gates of the fort which the French had left. Towards the end of autumn another band entrenched itself on the mainland opposite with the object of capturing all who might leave the island. Through most of the winter of 1650-51 they kept the island in a state of siege, trying to lure the Hurons into their power by protestations of friendship. But the Hurons were not to be outdone in treachery. Over thirty Iroquois warriors were attracted into the Huron fort by friendly overtures. Once inside they were seized and killed and their companions hearing of this took fright and departed. In the spring the Hurons fearing with reason that a terrible vengeance would be wreaked upon them fled to Grand Manitoulin Island about sixty leagues distant and after remaining there a short time, about three hundred of them followed their countrymen who had gone to Quebec the year before. From time to time small bands made their way down to the settlement on the Isle of Orleans.

Here around the protecting ramparts erected by the Jesuits, cabins were built, lands portioned out and tools and seeds distributed. Gradually

the Hurons rallied from their dejection and a flourishing settlement grew up under the watchful eyes of the missionaries. Even here, however, the Hurons were not safe. In 1656 the Mohawk descended upon them and killed or bore away into captivity over seventy. In the following year, partly out of fear, partly out of desperation, considerable numbers joined the Onondaga and Mohawk. The attenuated colony, still numbering several hundred persons, was removed to Quebec and lodged in a square enclosure of palisades close to the fort. Ten years later they were again removed to Ste. Foi three or four miles west of Quebec where they remained for six years. Then the soil being impoverished and the wood supply exhausted, they again changed their abode and under the auspices of the Jesuits settled at Old Lorette nine miles from Quebec. Before the end of the century they moved to New Lorette four miles distant, where the tourist may still find their descendants.

Some of the Hurons, it will be recalled, had sought asylum among the Petuns and shared the fate which shortly overtook that nation. For a short time after the disaster of St. Jean the Petuns, favoured by their isolated position among the Blue Mountains, held their ground, but at length were compelled to flee together with such other Hurons as had taken refuge with them. They made their way northward and settled on the Island of Michilimackinac with the Ottawa. Driven hither and yon, first by the Iroquois, then by the Sioux, they settled finally in the neighborhood of Detroit where they lived under the name of Wyandots until within the present century. They took an active part on the side of the French in the Seven Years' War and were the most formidable enemies of the English during Pontiac's War.

Other Hurons sought refuge with the Neutrals against whom the Iroquois

turned their victorious arms in 1650. The fate of the Neutrals bears in many respects a striking resemblance to the collapse of the Hurons. After two of their frontier towns had been taken with prodigious slaughter, the Neutrals abandoned their villages and corn fields and fled in wildest terror. In their voluntary exile famine dogged their footsteps and completed the work of the Iroquois. Many of the Hurons who had taken refuge with them shared their fate. Some fled to the south to the kindred Andastes ; others to the west, while scattered bands of stragglers made their way to the Huron colony at Quebec.

The inhabitants of two towns, St. Michel and St. Jean Baptiste, resorted to the desperate expedient of offering themselves to the Senecas. The victors accepted the proposal and the inhabitants of these two towns migrated in a body to the Seneca country where they were allowed to form their own town, Gandougarae. Here they became Iroquois in all but religion. When Father Fremin visited here eighteen years later he found many of them still devout Catholics.

The destruction of the Hurons shattered the best hope of the Canadian mission. Their fall marks the beginning of the end of Canada as a mission, and gradually the energies of the Jesuits were diverted from the conversion of the savages to the less laudable pastime of meddling in affairs of state. In the intervening period (1650-1665) their missionary zeal found expression in four main directions, exercising parochial functions in the French settlements[1], supervision of aboriginal settlements at Sillery, Three Rivers and on the Isle of Orleans, itinerant missions among the Algonkin tribes of the lower St. Lawrence and the Kennebec and the Ottawa of the Upper Lakes region, and from time to time attempts to carry the Cross into the lair of the enemy. It is with the two last that we are here principally concerned.

[1] In 1657 the Sulpicians took over this charge at Villemarie.

After the collapse of the Hurons and kindred Iroquoian tribes the Iroquois turned against the Algonkin of the lower St. Lawrence, forcing them farther and farther north towards Hudson's Bay. Though the Fathers for the most part seem to have remained near the settlements and trading posts, making the best of the opportunities presented when these natives came down to trade, there were several attempts during the period 1650-1665 to follow them to their places of refuge in the north. In 1652 Father Buteux was on such a mission to the Attikamègue when he was killed in an Iroquois ambush. In 1661 Fathers Dablon and Druillettes penetrated five hundred leagues up the Saguenay intending to seek out the refugees who had sought asylum around Hudson's Bay, but turned back on receiving news that the Iroquois were in the vicinity. Attempts were even made to reach the Ottawa and Hurons in their western homes on the Upper Lakes. In 1656 Fathers Druillettes and Garreau set out on this mission with a returning Ottawa convoy, but got no farther than just below Montreal. Here they fell into an Iroquois ambush. Abandoned by their Ottawa escorts and with Father Garreau mortally wounded, the missionaries had no choice but to turn back. Four years later Father Ménard and eight French companions returned with the Ottawa to the west and on Keweenaw Bay of Lake Superior a mission was founded. Amid dreadful privations and suffering the Father, aged and spent with years of toil and exposure, laboured among his indifferent and brutal hosts, making few converts. Hearing of a Huron band which had fled from the Iroquois into the forests of Wisconsin, the indomitable missionary set out to visit them in spite of the remonstrances of his companions. Abandoned by his Indian guides, the Father disappeared on the way, probably perishing from starvation and exposure. More successful was the mission among the Abnaki who, though

suffering Iroquois raids from time to time, escaped the desolation which had fallen on the Hurons and the Laurentian Algonkin.

Among the scattered and fear-driven bands of the St. Lawrence and the Upper Lakes the missions had much less chance of success than among a sedentary people, and partly for this reason, partly in the desperate hope that even the ferocious Iroquois might be tamed, we find the Jesuits after 1652 taking advantage of every lull in hostilities to carry the Cross into the cantons of the Five Nations. In July 1654 Father Le Moyne took the St. Lawrence route to the Onondaga. His principal mission was to confirm on behalf of the Governor the peace concluded in the previous autumn, but while there he was also to spy out the land and report on the sincerity of the Onondaga request for a mission among them. At Onontagué he was given a warm reception by the Onondaga and the envoys of the three Upper Nations who were present at the council. He was likewise given a site for the proposed French settlement. In spite of Le Moyne's favorable report, the Governor continued to temporise on the Onondaga demand and it was two years before any action was taken to implement the promise to establish a French settlement in their midst. In the meantime Le Moyne in 1655 journeyed to the Mohawk country in the hope of making a binding treaty with the fiercest and most inveterate foes of New France. During his absence a deputation of Onondaga arrived at Quebec to confirm the peace and to remind the French of their promise. Fathers Dablon and Chaumonot were sent back with them to ascertain their temper and disposition. The two missionaries were accorded an excellent reception. A chapel was built and the priests exercised their functions as freely as in the French settlements. Only from a few infidel Hurons did they encounter ill-will. In the spring of 1656 Dablon returned to Quebec with a deputation of Onondaga to report on the feeling among them.

The Indians were becoming impatient. The missionaries felt that it was now or never and it was decided to risk all for the sake of winning all.

An expedition, the entire expense of which fell on the Jesuits, was at once fitted out. Zachary Dupuys, major of the garrison of Quebec, commanded the party of forty or fifty French and a few Hurons. With them went four Fathers, Ménard, Le Mercier, Dablon and Frémin, and two lay Brothers of the Society. There was a brush with the Mohawk above Quebec but the rest of the journey was uneventful. The party was received cordially and with much ceremony at Onontagué. On July 24 a general council was held at which the Jesuits announced that they had come, not as traders, but as messengers of God. On the crest of a low hill near the shore of Lake Onondaga was erected a commodious habitation with smaller buildings, all enclosed with the usual palisade. Called by the Onondaga Gannentaa, this was for two years to be the centre of Jesuit missionary effort among the Five Nations.

From Gannentaa went Chaumonot to the Senecas and Ménard to the Cayuga and Oneida. The work began under favorable auspices. Among the Upper Nations the priests found considerable numbers of Christian Hurons whose influence had disposed many favorably towards the Gospel. But the savage nature is fickle and the French lacked the military strength which might have kept the Iroquois tractable. Just when the situation looked most hopeful a sudden change took place in the demeanor of the Upper Iroquois. It was first seen at Montreal where a number of Onondaga had gone to bring back the Hurons. First of all they refused to embark the two Jesuits who were to accompany them. Then on the way they maltreated the Hurons, massacring and even burning some, and treating the rest like doomed captives. The first thing which the new arrivals discovered at Gannentaa was that there was a conspiracy on foot against the French. The immediate cause was d'Ailleboust's arrest of the Iroquois in the colony. The first

violent reaction on receipt of this news crystallised into a deliberate and well considered conspiracy. Father Le Moyne was to be sent to Quebec by his Mohawk hosts with a numerous escort to secure the release of the prisoners. When this had been accomplished, they were to fall upon the French.

Before this could be done the suspicions of Dupuys had been aroused by the departure of numerous bands of Mohawk, Oneida and Onondaga equipped for war. The whole plot was revealed to him by a Christian. Immediately he began secret construction of light boats to carry the colonists back to Quebec. When the boats were constructed there remained the problem of making an escape secretly. Finally the stratagem of the "eat-all" feast, suggested by the young Radisson who had been a prisoner among the Iroquois and was familiar with their savage customs, was employed. While the unsuspecting savages stuffed on the viands supplied lavishly by the French, the boats were dragged to the water's edge under cover of the noise of the drums and trumpets with which some of the French enlivened the festivities. While the gorged savages slept, the French made their escape during the night, leaving behind their dogs and poultry so that the flight would not be immediately discovered. When the Onondaga recovered consciousness they were surprised at the deathlike stillness, became suspicious, and breaking down the gate discovered to their fury that their prospective victims had escaped. Believing that the powerful God of the French was in league with the colonists and had supplied them with boats, they made no attempt to follow the fugitives, who, after sustaining the loss of three men in the rapids of the St. Lawrence, reached Quebec on the 25rd of April. The flight of the Onondaga colony brought to a temporary end the work of the Jesuits among the Iroquois. In 1661 Le Moyne again visited the Onondaga to ransom French prisoners held by them, but for another decade no further effort was to be made to civilise and christianise the Iro-

quois. Nevertheless some of the seed sown had fallen on fruitful ground and the way had been prepared for the great effort of 1667-1687.

In 1665 New France became a royal province and missions and fur trade took second place to colonization. The Jesuits had made their supreme effort in Huronia and had seen it brought to naught by the Iroquois. For a quarter of a century they had struggled to build up a spiritual empire among the heathen of North America, but, to all appearances, they had struggled in vain. There were still wide fields to conquer, but the tribes who roamed them were not the material of which an empire could be made. The Jesuits had still many years of useful labour before them but the results were not as solid and substantial as might have been obtained had the Hurons not been destroyed.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

It remains for us now to gather up the main threads of our narrative and ask, "What, in short, was the influence of the Iroquois upon the development of New France ?" Though the fur trade, missions and settlement were closely connected and complementary parts of a coherent whole, it seems convenient to retain this topical division in answering this question, since the influence exerted by the Iroquois upon these different phases of French endeavour was by no means uniform. Let us consider first, then, the influence of the Iroquois on the fur trade.

In a sense the whole structure of the fur trade in New France was built upon the friendship of the Hurons and Algonkin and this involved the enmity of the Iroquois who had been their bitter foes for many years before the French occupation of the St. Lawrence valley began in 1608. The alliance between the French and the Algonkian tribes was logical and probably inevitable. The Algonkian tribes were the nearest neighbors of the French and their co-operation was indispensable to the prosecution of Champlain's exploring enterprises and to the safety of any settlement that might be founded in the St. Lawrence valley. Further, and this was the primary consideration of the fur trader, they and their Huron allies controlled the output of the richest fur-bearing area on the continent. In translating his friendship into terms of active aid against their Iroquois enemies, Champlain was brought into contact with the Hurons, through whom in turn the hunting tribes of the north and west were brought within the orbit of French commerce. The most important result of Champlain's alliance with the Hurons was, then, the expansion of French trade

to the west. Though Tadoussac remained an important trading centre, it took second place to Quebec after 1615.

During the early period of the trading companies (1608-27) the hostility of the Iroquois served to cement the friendship of the Algonkin and Hurons with the French, and since the Iroquois at this time were only holding their own in the intermittent conflict, their enmity was more of an asset than a liability to the fur trade of New France. Their energies largely absorbed in the conflict with their southern neighbors, the Mahicam, the Mohawk after 1610 seem to have left the St. Lawrence valley in comparative peace.

During the middle period (1628-45) this situation gradually underwent a change in which the principal factor was the arming of the Mohawk with firearms obtained in trade with the Dutch with whom they were brought into direct contact after the expulsion of the Mahican from the Hudson region in the late 1620's. The political advantages inherent in the League of the Five Nations, the economic advantages accruing from their agricultural pursuits, were now supplemented by the military advantage of firearms in the hands of the most aggressive and, in a sense, the "key" member of the League. The Iroquois country, relatively small and poor in the fur of the beaver, was soon trapped out and in the interests of trade with the Dutch it became imperative to find new sources of supply. The obvious step was to wrest from the Hurons and Algonkin control of the trade of the rich beaver areas of the northern Laurentian forests. Economic rivalry now became superimposed on the ancient hostility and reinforced it. Iroquois tactics during this period consisted in gradually wearing down the strength of their enemies by intermittent raids on their villages and hunting encampments and by waylaying Indian traders as they came down laden

with furs to the French trading posts. Above Three Rivers the Mohawk held the St. Lawrence in a virtual state of siege. The menace did not become really serious until the 'forties when it began to make itself felt in a gradually dwindling stream of trade from the west. Below Quebec, however, there was as yet no danger since the Iroquois seem to have been afraid of the cannon of the fort. The trade at Tadoussac continued as usual but its volume fell far below that which had been obtained from the west.

During this second period the French population had grown, but it was concentrated at three widely separated points, Quebec, Three Rivers and Villemarie, and this in itself was a source of weakness. Having to rely on themselves for protection, the French colonists, still numerically few, were powerless to send aid to their Indian allies whose numbers were steadily declining through war and pestilence and to whom French policy denied possession of firearms until it was too late. The Iroquois menace was allowed to grow, not through failure to recognise it, since as early as 1655 Champlain had foreseen it and begged the means of removing it, while after 1640 the Jesuit warnings were emphatic and urgent. The government of France, absorbed in other matters, and the Company of New France, pursuing a short sighted policy of immediate gain, must bear the responsibility for the tragedies of the period 1646-1665.

During this last period the Iroquois under the inspiration of the Mohawk to whose ferocity success had added ambitious plans of conquest embarked on a war of annihilation against the French and their savage allies. By 1655 they had destroyed and scattered the kindred nations of the Hurons, Petuns, Neutrals and Eries. The Algonkin were driven north and west; many of them sought refuge with the French. The French settle-

ments were continually harassed but by prodigies of valor managed to cling precariously to existence. The dispersion of Huron and Algonkin resulted for several years in virtual stoppage of trade from the west. Gradually, however, it was reorganised but the annual fur flotillas were a thing of the past. At intervals of two, three and four years the Ottawa who had fled to the north shore of Lake Superior ventured under French leadership to band together and run the Iroquois gauntlet to reach the trading posts. For a time the trade at Tadoussac had continued as usual but after the dispersion of the Hurons and Algonkin of the upper St. Lawrence, the Iroquois carried their ravages as far east as Tadoussac, penetrating up the Saguenay to Lake St. John and beyond. It is not entirely fantastic, therefore, to presume that if after 1665 the paternal absolutism of Louis XIV had not intervened to bolster the defences of New France and to carry war into the Iroquois country, the history of the western trade might have been repeated in the hinterland of Tadoussac and the traffic of the Saguenay region disrupted and disorganised as had been that of the Ottawa and St. Maurice.

Closely linked with the fortunes of the fur trade were those of the missions since both trader and missionary, for different reasons and in different ways, were intimately concerned with the welfare of the natives. Thus during the last fifteen years of our period both saw their hopes blighted and their occupations to a large extent gone when the Indian allies of the French were scattered by the Iroquois.

Though the fortunes of the trade and the missions ran along parallel lines during these later years, it was not thus earlier. During the period 1603-1628 before the Iroquois became formidable, the traders were reaping a rich harvest of furs, but the missionaries made little progress, though the Iroquois left them undisturbed. The founders

of the Canadian mission, the Recollets, were a mendicant order dependent on the trading companies for financial support. The traders had not yet learned that in the missions they would find their most useful ally and the support which they gave to the priests was grudging and niggardly. Without finances, under the necessity of doing the pioneering work in the Indian dialects, and confronted by indifference or hostility among the peoples they were attempting to convert and by opposition from the traders, the early missionaries found the labour hard and the harvest exceedingly meagre.

After 1632 missionary work was entrusted to the Jesuits and the financial obstacle largely disappeared, as did the opposition of the traders. Yet even with funds and labourers in abundance the Jesuits found the way difficult and progress slow, during the first few years of their mission. It was only under the stress of plague, famine and above all war that the Hurons became tractable. Iroquois inroads after 1640 did far more to bring the Hurons and Algonkin to an acceptance of the Faith than had the tireless zeal and self-sacrificing labours of the Fathers prior to this date. The Faith which had languished in times of prosperity flourished in adversity.

The period 1640-48, though fraught with portents of the coming disaster, was the high water mark of the Jesuit missions. But the success was only temporary. The cataclysm of 1648-50 which overthrew the Hurons ruined the best hopes of the Canadian mission. With these sedentary people reduced to the status of homeless wanderers, and the roving Algonkin driven into the distant and almost inaccessible forests, the Jesuits were left with little occupation. In 1663 the only fruits of thirty years missionary effort were a handful of Huron converts at Quebec, a few in the villages of the Five Nations - some captive Hurons, some Iroquois converted in the

course of spasmodic Jesuit labours among them during the decade 1650-1660 - considerable numbers of neophytes among the wandering tribes of northern Quebec, and a flourishing mission among the Abnakis of the Kennebec. The Jesuit dream of a Christian empire in the wilderness was gone beyond recall. The guns and tomahawks of the Iroquois were the ruin of Jesuit hopes. The hostility of the Iroquois determined the field of French missionary effort and determined also its ultimate failure. Had the Jesuits been able to curb or convert these ferocious hands, the future of New France might have been very different. Parkman may not be far from the mark when he says -

> "Savages tamed - not civilized, for that was scarcely possible, - would have been distributed in communities through the valleys of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, ruled by priests in the interests of Catholicity and of France. Their habits of agriculture would have been developed, and their instincts of mutual slaughter repressed. The swift decline of the Indian population would have been arrested; and it would have been made, through the fur trade, a source of prosperity to New France. Unmolested by Indian enemies, and fed by a rich commerce, she would have put forth a vigorous growth. True to her far-reaching and adventurous genius, she would have occupied the West with traders, settlers and garrisons, and cut up the virgin wilderness into fiefs, while as yet the colonies of England were but a weak and broken line along the shore of the Atlantic; and when at last the great conflict came, England and Liberty would have been confronted, not by a depleted antagonist, still feeble from the exhaustion of a starved and persecuted infancy, but by an athletic champion of the principles of Richelieu and of Loyola."(1

It is a speculation, no more, but an interesting one and it is for this reason that we include it here. On trade and on missions, then, the influence of the Iroquois was profound. We turn now to settlement.

After tracing the progress of New France during the first sixty years of its existence, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the successive trading companies to which the destinies of the country had been confided were in the main responsible for the slow

(1 F. Parkman. The Jesuits in North America. (Boston, 1916), pp. 447-8.

development of the colony and that the part played by the Iroquois in this regard was somewhat less than has been sometimes assumed. At the end of the first twenty years of Company rule (1608-1629), when the Iroquois menace was scarcely apparent save as a possible deterrent to trade with the tribes of the Lakes' region, New France had a population of scarcely one hundred and of these only two or three families could be called real colonists who had made permanent homes in the country and lived on the produce of the soil. "The Fort of Quebec, surrounded by a few poor houses and barracks, two or three cabins on the Island of Montreal, perhaps as many at Tadoussac and in some other places on the River St. Lawrence, for the convenience of the fishing and trading, the beginnings of a habitation at Three Rivers and the ruins of Port Royal - of such did New France consist and such were all the fruits of the discoveries of Verazzano, Jacques Cartier, M. de Roberval and Champlain and of the great expenditure of the Marquis de la Roche and M. de Monts and of the industry of a large number of Frenchmen, who might have established a flourishing settlement if they had been well directed."[1] The failure of the small trading company as a colonizing agent had been amply demonstrated.

Upon the return of New France to the French crown in 1632, the experiment of the chartered company was tried again on a larger scale and for thirty years the colony was entrusted to the care of the Company of New France. The first two attempts of the Company to discharge its colonizing obligations (in 1628 and 1629) had met with disaster and after 1635, when it resumed control of the colony, it seems to have imitated its predecessors and evaded its responsibilities. The progress made in settlement

[1] Charlevoix, op. cit., I, 176.

during the years of direct Company rule (1633-45) was due almost entirely to the efforts of private individuals, the seigneurs who took up grants in the St. Lawrence valley and brought out their own colonists, and of religious corporations such as the Society of Montreal, which was responsible for the establishment of the colony of Villemarie. In 1645 the Iroquois wars had so disrupted trade that the Company of New France consented to transfer control of the trade and with it its responsibilities and obligations to the inhabitants of the colony. Under the Company of Habitants the trade was still further diminished by Iroquois hostilities and with it disappeared any prospects of colonization financed from that source. Nevertheless progress was made through the initiative of private individuals and particularly of the Society of Montreal. Despite the Iroquois wars which raged, with one or two short interruptions, from 1641 to 1665, the colony presented in 1665 a very different appearance than in 1632. "Houses were to be seen all the way from Cap Tourmente to Quebec. The Isle of Orleans was growing rich harvests. Far away on the south side of the river settlements were visible. Quebec stood out boldly with houses and quays in the lower town, and high up on the cliff, a fort and a group of churches and monasteries. Settlements stretched up the river beyond Quebec to Three Rivers and Montreal."(1 Through immigration and natural increase the population had risen to between two thousand and two thousand five hundred souls.(2 During the last twenty years when Iroquois hostilities were at their height New France had progressed infinitely more than during the first twenty, when the Iroquois had been scarcely more than a name, or during the period 1632-1645 when the baneful influence of the Iroquois on trade was only beginning to make itself felt and was not suf-

(1 Relation of 1665. Quoted in G. M. Wrong. The Rise and Fall of New France, Vol. I (Toronto, 1928), p. 365.
(2 Sulte, Histoire, IV, p. 6.

ficient to provide an excuse, on financial grounds, for the Company's neglect of colonizing obligations.

When, however, New France with her meagre twenty-five hundred is compared to New England with her fifty thousand, we might well ask "Why ?" But the answer does not seem to be "the Iroquois." New England has a unique position among the earlier colonies in North America in that its chief interest lay hot in the fur trade but in agriculture and fishing. The colony was a haven for a persecuted sect and settlers came out with the object of making a permanent home. There was no great natural highway through the country such as the St. Lawrence, and mountains confined the little colony in a comparatively small area between them and the sea. The New England settlers had sedentary Indians as neighbors.

New France, on the other hand, owed its origin to the fur trade and as long as this continued to be the dominant interest of the controllers of the colony, New France could not compete with her southern rival in population or strength, since fur trade and settlement are antipathetic. Other considerations apart, natural geographic factors of topography and climate must necessarily have retarded the development of New France. Then too the missionary spirit, with its emphasis on the conversion of the savages, tended to give an erroneous idea of the realities of the situation and to obscure the needs of the habitants, besides diverting to missionary objectives the wealth of charitably inclined individuals which was sorely needed for the promotion of settlement and the defense of the settlers already established in the country. Thus the habitants, the only colonists worthy of the name, were totally neglected by the court, by the Company and by the charitable individuals who poured their wealth

into the coffers of the Jesuits. The colony of Villemarie, which owed its origin to a religious foundation, was the one exception to this general rule. The causes of the slow development of New France go deeper than the Iroquois wars which might, indeed, almost be regarded as a result rather than as a cause of the weakness of the colony. New England had to contend with the hostility of savage neighbors too, but her population was sufficient to crush them.(1 On the other hand, had the Iroquois joined to their ferocity the discipline and military knowledge that belong to civilization, they could easily have wiped out New France and made the banks of the St. Lawrence once more a solitude.

But if the part played by the Iroquois in retarding the development of New France during the period 1603-1665 was not fundamental, their influence on the daily life of the colonists was profound. There could be no normal agricultural development so long as there was no safety outside the walls of the fort or so long as the cultivator might at any moment be forced to drop hoe or sickle and gun in hand prepare to meet the onslaught of a well armed and numerically superior foe. At Villemarie and Three Rivers cultivation of the land was confined to a small area around the fort. Near Quebec, where the Iroquois did not become troublesome till the fifties, clearing and cultivation of the land was able to make more progress, but towards the close of the period even here the work of tilling the soil became increasingly hazardous and the food supply of the colony consequently precarious. At the same time the chief source of the colony's wealth, the fur trade, almost disappeared, thanks to the Iroquois, and poverty went hand in hand with danger. It was not a healthy condition of affairs, but it was not irremediable, as the history

(1 Jesuit Relations XXXVI, 105.

of New France under royal rule was to demonstrate.

Probably the most far-reaching influence of the Iroquois during these years was exerted on the national mind of New France. "Le Temps Heroique" with its roll of martyrs and its deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice played a very important part in the creation of that national tradition which makes French Canadian culture and French Canadian resolve so tenacious in the Canada which has become a British state.

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