

LE MOYNE THE PEACEMAKER

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worthwhile and conversions and baptisms did take place.

Word came to Father Le Moyne that the Hurons had an Iroquois captive in a village eight leagues away (20 miles) whom the Hurons were going to burn. Father Le Moyne could not stop what the Hurons seemed right, just as legal executions seem right to us, nevertheless he hastened through the forest in the summer's blistering heat and arrived in time to instruct and baptize the poor captive, who died in flames shouting, "I am at the point of death, but after this death Heaven shall be my dwelling place." See JESUIT RELATIONS, Vol. XXI, p. 169.

Less dramatic, but showing more perseverance of the faith is the story of the conversion of a poor Huron woman who gave a bearskin robe, which was her chief possession, for an altar floor rug, and then thinly clad, endured with patience the cold northern winter.

The great Huron warrior, Enstache A-HAT-SIS-TA-RI, courageous and ever heroic, rallied all his assembled friends by proclaiming in a loud voice that at last he was running away from an enemy and from danger. When his friends gazed at him in amazed silence, he said "the danger of hell fire" and set the Iroquois as his friends had supposed.

Another baptism was a trial of the diabolical magic of the chief sorcerer of the tribe against the Christian spirit embodied in the Church and its missionaries. The sorcerer's daughter came to desire baptism. Poor old sorcerer, his own daughter was going to discredit the power of his incantations. He made life dangerous for the missionary. But the daughter was baptized.

Wonder and holy awe come to parents who bring a new life into this world. But Father Le Moyne led human souls to be born into life everlasting. That man should even think that by any means he can turn the tide of eternity for a soul is such an awe-inspiring, audacious thought, that God might make man immortal for the mere audacity of thinking it.

In 1642-1643 Father Le Moyne was associated in the mission of St. Joseph with Father Charles Garnier (not related to Father Julien Garnier, Apostle of the Senecas). Father Charles Garnier (JESUIT RELATIONS, Vol. XXVI, p. 265) is now one of the North American martyr saints. His long letter to his brother written at this time is in English translation in the Thwaites JESUIT RELATIONS. It will interest the inquiring reader.

Continued performance of work done will lead toward a routine which does not make news. There is little to report of Father Le Moyne in the years before he left Huronia.

Around him, however, events of interest were happening. In 1642 Fort St. Marie had been built, near the site of modern Midland, Ontario. Fathers Brebeuf and Chaumont had made a missionary journey to the Neutral, who then had four villages east of the Niagara River near Lockport. Father Jogues had been captured by Mohawks on the St. Lawrence River while returning to Huronia with a supply of crosses bearing supplies. His companion, Rene Goupil, was killed at Auriesville, New York, where their Mohawk captors had taken them. Father Jogues was assisted in his escape from the Mohawks by the Reverend Johannes Megapolensis, Dutch Reformed minister in New Amsterdam at that time who shall bear more notice later.

When Father Jogues was taken among the Mohawks, Father Jogues did some missionary work, which drew Father Le Moyne and other missionaries to visit the Mohawks in later years.

On the 18th of October, 1646, Father Jogues returned to the Mohawks and lived at Auriesville, John Lalonde, an Indian, who guided Father Jogues, was the first to visit to the Mohawks who were killed.

The death of these three was a beginning of the martyrdom of the saints of North America at the hands of the Indians. The Mohawks and other Iroquois had been making their raids on the Hurons and the Senecas. And

Hunting Scene Among the Senecas



This photograph shows a constructed model hunting party of Seneca Indians. The figures are life-size and natively garbed. It was the task of the early missionaries to work among these natives and teach them the Faith. Most of the missionary

work was done from 1625 on. The English-French war slowed down the work but with peace came added zeal and a greater number of conversions. (Courtesy New York State Museum, Albany, N. Y.)

ror with which the Iroquois began attacking the Hurons in 1648. By 1650 the Iroquois had driven the Hurons out of the Huron country, and more than a thousand captives were distributed among the five Iroquois cantons. Many other Hurons and Algonquins took refuge in Indian settlements between Montreal and Quebec on the St. Lawrence River.

Fathers Antoine Daniel, Noel Chabanel, Charles Garnier, Jean de Brebeuf, Gabriel Lalemont were put to death in the Huron country by Iroquois Indians. Of these martyrs Brebeuf and Lalemont were slowly tortured and burned.

All of these martyrs 1648-1650 made such a supreme sacrifice that visiting the places where they gave all in their devotion to God, imparts the emotion of being very close to Christ on the cross at Calvary. The shrine of the martyrs at Midland, Ontario and the shrine at Auriesville, New York, although far apart in distance, are close together in motive and in sacrifice.

These martyrs were the close friends of Father Le Moyne. He had shared with them all the hopes of this once prosperous Huron mission. He had shared with them his soul's most heaven-reaching aspirations for God. They had been to him all that the love of brothers in his own home would have been. They had shared the hardships of camp and trail, the glories of summer, the fierce storms of winter, until it was more than love he had for them. Their souls were welded to his. Grief said they were gone. But Faith, stronger than grief, said they were strong and still in touch with Father Le Moyne.

Chapter VII

EMBASSIES TO THE IROQUOIS

After the wreck of Huronia by the Iroquois, Father Le Moyne having returned from there to the French settlements on the St. Lawrence River,

very likely was employed in ministering to the Algonquin and Huron refugees, who in large numbers had come and erected new villages with pole and bark cabins on the St. Lawrence River, and near the little cities of the French. The presence of Hurons and Algonquins in this settled area of New France exposed the French as well as their Indian neighbors to the tragic attacks of the Iroquois, and especially the Mohawks for a period of fifteen years. For the Mohawks were not satisfied with their victory over the Hurons, but continued to pursue, capture, and enslave or burn them.

A situation potent with the threat of blood and fire was made by the continuance of this age-old, inter-tribal hostility. It threatened the existence of New France. In these most difficult times Father Le Moyne began his peace embassy to the Iroquois. His prolonged efforts came to a climax in a long period of peace. As a result of his work, missionaries and chapels became established among the Senecas of the Rochester area, and in the other Iroquois cantons, and profound effects resulted from his work in New York State and in the history of the nation.

After leaving Huronia, Father Le Moyne resided part of the time at the Jesuit residence in Three Rivers and was a companion of Father Rene Menard (missionary at Cayuga Lake, New York 1656-1658, whose life story was published in the Courier in 1933 as the first of this series of annual historical articles).

Three Rivers was a place of strategic importance as a place of meeting with the northern tribes. There was a detour canoe route by way of the Gatineau River and to its headwaters, and then through a maze of lakes to the upper St. Maurice River. This detour from near the site of modern Ottawa to Three Rivers, avoided the Mohawk-infested portions of the lower Ottawa River and of the upper St. Lawrence. Champlain (1613) mentions this detour.

Three Rivers is located on the St. Lawrence River at the divided mouth of the St. Maurice River and at the end of this intricate grand detour. But even this remote by-way of the waters of the wilderness was not safe from

the marauding Iroquois. For again these Iroquois brought sorrow to the hearts of Father Le Moyne and to the hearts of his Jesuit brothers in the residence at Three Rivers. On the 10th of May, 1652, Father Jacques Buteaux, Jesuit, was killed by Mohawk Iroquois on the upper St. Maurice River.

See Abbe Albert Tessier's "Jacques Buteaux" p. 49; published in 1934 in Three Rivers, Quebec, Canada.

Father Buteaux was the sixth Jesuit brother of Father Le Moyne to be killed by the Iroquois within four years. Not only were the Jesuits being killed by the Iroquois, but also were many members of the northern tribes, and the development of the missions and of French Canada was being stopped. Here then was an emergency which might result in the defeat of an army, but New France had no army to send against the Iroquois at this time (1650-1665). Instead of an army, one servant of the Prince of Peace was sent time and time again, a missionary, thoroughly trained, indeed, in all the complex moods of Indian thought and diplomacy, a master of two Indian languages, quick, adroit, and of a friend-making disposition—yet only one man instead of an army.

But this one man had sublime faith in God and an assured hope of immortality. He was fearless. Death could not rob him. He already had won Indian souls for Christ and the Church, and he believed that he could win others, even perhaps the souls of the murderers of his Jesuit brothers. He would make civil and secular peace by leading men into peace with God. This man was Father Simon Le Moyne. A troubled world today might well learn from the example of this one missionary, Father Simon Le Moyne.

The frigate arrived from Montreal on the 15th of July (1653) bringing news of the peace negotiations. Father Le Moyne spoke for the French and the AWEN-RE of TE-HON TIA IE HEN served as interpreter.

Father Le Moyne's name again is recorded in the Journal of the Jesuits (JESUIT RELATIONS XXXVIII:179) which was a diary of events in Quebec written by Jesuits.

The people seeking peace were the

Onondagas, whose villages were located east of the site of Syracuse. These negotiations, which probably were held in or near Montreal, are reported in the notes of the JESUIT RELATIONS, Vol. XIV, p. 288 as his first trip to the Iroquois cantons. Since these negotiations in 1653 were with Indians from Onondaga, and since Father Le Moyne says, while on his way to Onondaga in 1654, he was going to a land "unknown to us," evidently he did not go to Onondaga in 1653.

At this council in 1653 he received an invitation which took him upon his arduous and history making voyage of 1654. At this time, the Iroquois were threatened on several fronts. New Englanders proposed an attack on the Dutch and the Mohawks. The Audastris in the upper Susquehanna Valley were showing new strength in their unending war with the Iroquois. The Eries, located in villages from the site of modern Salamanca, New York westward, had forced the Seneca Iroquois to retreat from their western villages and had burned a Seneca village. (Probably at Huckleberry Hill near East Avon, New York.) In addition to these military anxieties of the Iroquois chiefs, was the fear that in case they were hard pressed, the 1000 Huron captives in the Iroquois villages might turn against their captors. Since these Hurons asked for Christian teaching by the French missionaries, their captors, the Iroquois, had come to the French with a request for peace and mission aries, and for a truce with the French that would hold while they dealt with the menace of too many other enemies.

Chapter VIII

THE TRIP TO ONONDAGA

As a result of the Peace Council of Father Le Moyne with Onondaga ambassadors at Montreal in 1653, Father Le Moyne was sent on this momentous voyage to Onondaga in 1654. On July 2 on the day of the Feast of the Visitation, Father Le Moyne set out from Quebec. A translation of his Journal may be seen in JESUIT RELATIONS XI, pp. 91 following and in A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF NEW YORK, Vol. I, p. 33 following.

"July 17—Having found a young man of stout heart and long a resident in these parts, we set out from Montreal."

On the next day they encountered nothing but immense, foaming, current waves and rocks and shoals, as they made their way up the overwhelming La Chine Rapids, sometimes by wading, sometimes by jumping from stone along the shore, and sometimes carrying through the woods. "We go," said Father Le Moyne, "toward a country unknown to us."

July 19—The river continues to increase in width and forms a lake very beautiful to see, about 25 miles long (8 or 10 leagues). Toward sunset, we were warned of coming rain by an annoying swarm of mosquitoes. The rain came and drenched us all night long. "It is a pleasure sweet and innocent beyond conception to have in these circumstances no shelter, but the trees planted by nature since the creation of the world."

Father Le Moyne noticed "toward the east a chain of high mountains—the Adirondacks."

On July 21, it rained all night and the bare rocks served Father Le Moyne as bed, mattress, and everything else. He remarks with admirable philosophy that "He who has God with him rests calmly anywhere."

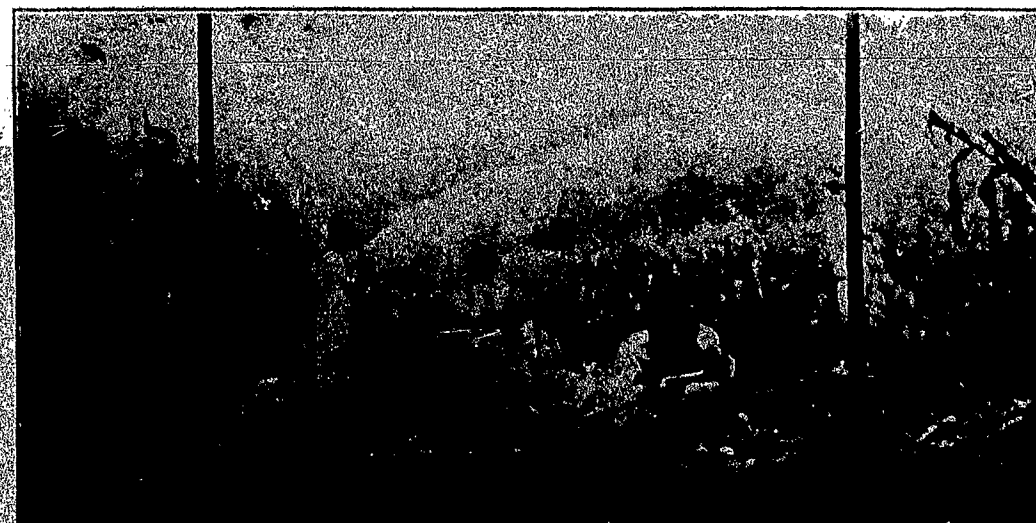
Many wild cows are reported. Probably these animals were wood buffalo which are now extinct. Sometimes between 400 and 500 were seen in one herd near the St. Lawrence River. Some rocks smashed their canoe, but soon another is made from the material on hand. Very heavy rain and high wind compelled them to make shelter. Again, as in the case of the broken canoe, the forest knowledge and skill of the guides are called upon, and soon a cabin is made of poles and of bark stripped from trees. Father Le Moyne wrote, "Ambition gains no entrance to this place and it is every bit as acceptable to us as if its roof were made of gold."

July 23—More rain. The canoe is turned bottom up to serve as a shelter.

July 30—Lake Ontario is reached. It is so very windy that these voyagers are forced to carry their canoes and baggage across the inland end of

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Harvesting in a Seneca Village



Though crudely done, the Seneca Indians did considerable agricultural work. This picture gives a general idea as to how the Redskins carried on their work. To bring about a peace-loving Indian

and to subordinate the love of war to that of love of peace was one of the greatest tasks of the early missionaries. (Courtesy New York State Museum, Albany, N. Y.)