

Explorations

(Continued from Page 33)

La Salle left his most faithful lieutenant, Henry De Tonty, in charge of the Illinois colony and Father Ribourde was its spiritual head. Earlier in this summary the rise to dominance of the Senecas by a series of conquests has been mentioned. The highest reach of the power of the Senecas took place in Illinois.

During the absence of La Salle from his forts in Illinois, the Senecas and other Iroquois went on the war path and came to the residence of the Illinois Indians where La Salle's newly built forts stood. At this time Father Membre talked with Seneca warriors whom he had met the year before, as he said, in the "village of the Senecas." Neither Tonty nor Membre was able to persuade the Senecas and their allies not to attack the Illinois Indians. So Tonty and Father Membre witnessed the slaughter and retreat of Illinois Indians who were struck down by the Senecas and other Iroquois.

Along with this wreck of the Illinois tribe came the destruction of La Salle's fort and all of his property which he had brought to Illinois as the result of years of hard work. Father Gabriel de La Ribourde, the senior priest of this expedition, was killed by Kjekapoo Indians near Seneca, Illinois, September 19, 1680.

See Habib Heroes of the Cross Chapter VIII.

How powerful had become the Indians whose chief village was Totiakton at Rochester Junction is shown by the above events which indicate that the Senecas were able to go on the warpath almost to the Mississippi River with no opposing tribes to stop them, and when they reached these Illinois Indians, they put them to flight with great slaughter. The Senecas at this climax of far-conquering glory offered civilization one of two choices, either to leave them to dominate the wilderness with tomahawk and scalping knife, or to find some way of making them obedient to civilized control.

The Jesuit missionaries in the Iroquois Cantons had promoted years of peaceful relationship between the Iroquois in their village and the French. But some sterner measures were necessary to control the far wandering Iroquois war parties. Civilization in America owes to the French gratitude for having brought these Senecas into peaceful relations with any European power. The military expeditions which accomplish this long peace of the French with the Iroquois are mentioned elsewhere.

AT THE GULF OF MEXICO

Late in December, 1682, La Salle, Tonty, his lieutenant and Father Membre, his chaplain and a party of Frenchmen and Indians were again in their rebuilt Fort Miami at the mouth of the St. Joseph River on Lake Michigan. Out on Lake Michigan from this fort went a flotilla of canoes with Tonty and Father Membre. Shortly afterwards La Salle followed, and the whole party of 54 persons was assembled near the mouth of the Chicago River in what is now the business center of the city of Chicago. The Chicago River squirms through flat lands into Lake Michigan. When, using a little exaggeration, there is a good heavy dew, on the prairies west of Chicago, the headwaters of this river spread out to blend in an enormous puddle with the waters of the Des Plains River which flows in the opposite direction toward the Illinois River and the Mississippi.

Before the days when the Chicago drainage canal made this Chicago river back up and flow into the Mississippi River, the waters of this Chicago River became so thick and strong with the

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September 1, 1939

Most Reverend James H. Kearney, D.D.
Bishop of Rochester
100 West Street
Rochester, N.Y. 14602

My dear Bishop Kearney:

Please accept our sincere congratulations upon the singular record of your diocesan newspaper, the Catholic Courier, in rounding out 50 years of uninterrupted publication.

We of the Yawman & Erbe Mfg. Company have been able to observe the progress of the Catholic press in this diocese since its very beginning in 1889. Some 9 years before that date this company was struggling to obtain a foothold in the business world.

In the progress of your newspaper, and in the progress of our company, the motivating forces seem to us very similar - devotion to an ideal and determination to render service.

Our ideal has been, of course, to create devices that would add to the efficiency of modern business and office practice. In this field we have been fortunate enough to achieve leadership.

The Catholic Courier, as we see it, is dedicated essentially to the task of adding to the efficiency of living. In its ideals and its content, it seeks to clarify thought, rectify error, overcome ignorance, and broaden understanding.

In the half-century career of the Catholic Courier, your newspaper has achieved a type of leadership which is exceptional, not only in the Rochester diocese but in the ranks of the entire Catholic press.

We wish you many more half-centuries of progress.

Very truly yours,
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