

keep, to replace one of his Hurons who had been killed in the fray. He then hastened to Michillimakinac, where he presented his prisoner to the French commandant, who, not knowing that Denonville was treating with the Iroquois, caused the unhappy wretch to be put to death. Immediately after this, Le Rat sent for an old Iroquois, who had long been a prisoner among the Hurons, and gave him his liberty to go and acquaint his nation, that, while the French were amusing their enemies with negotiations, they continued to take prisoners and murder them. This artifice, worthy of the most infamous European policy, succeeded as the savage Le Rat desired. The war was renewed with greater fury than ever, and lasted the longer, as the English, who were lately at variance with France, on account of the deposition of James II. thought it their interest to make an alliance with the Iroquois.

An English fleet, which sailed from Europe in 1690, appeared before Quebec in October, to lay siege to the place. They had reason to expect but a faint resistance, as the savages were to make a powerful diversion, to draw off the principal land forces of the colony. But they were compelled shamefully to relinquish the enterprise, after having sustained great losses. The causes of this disappointment merit some discussion.

When the British ministry projected the reduction of Canada, they determined that the land- and sea forces should arrive there at the same time. This wise plan was executed with the utmost exactness. As the ships were sailing up the river St. Lawrence, the troops marched by land, in order to reach the scene of action at the same instant as the fleet. They were nearly arrived, when the Iroquois who conducted and supported them, recollected the hazard they ran in leading their allies to the conquest of Quebec. Situated as we are, said they, in a council they held, between two European nations, each powerful enough to destroy us, both interested in our destruction, when they no longer stand in need of our assistance; what better measure can we take, than to prevent the one from being victorious over the other? Then will each of them be compelled to court our alliance, or to bribe us to a neutrality. This system, which seemed to be dictated by the same kind of deep policy as that which directs the balance of Europe, determined the Iroquois to return to their respective homes under various pretences. Their defection obliged the English to retreat; and the French, now in security on their lands, united all their

forces with as much unanimity as success, for the defence of their capital.

The Iroquois, from motives of policy, lifted their resentment against the French, and were attached rather to the name than to the interests of England. These two European powers, therefore, irreconcilable rivals to each other, but separated by the territory of a savage nation, equally apprehensive of the superiority of either, were prevented from doing each other so much injury as they could have wished. The war was carried on merely by a few depredations, fatal to the colonies, but of little consequence to the several nations concerned in them. During the scene of cruelties exercised by the several parties of English and Iroquois, French and Hurons, whose ravages extended one hundred leagues from home; some actions were performed, which seemed to render human nature superior to such enormities.

Some French and Indians having joined in an expedition, that required a long march, their provisions began to fail. The Hurons caught plenty of game, and always offered some to the French, who were not such skilful hunters. The latter would have declined accepting this generous offer; *Tu spare with us the fatigue of war*, said the savages: *It is but reasonable that we should spare with you the necessities of life; we should not be men if we acted otherwise with men*. If similar instances of magnanimity may have sometimes occurred among Europeans, the following is peculiar to savages.

A party of Iroquois being informed that a party of French and their allies were advancing with superior forces, they fled with precipitation. They were headed by Onontague, who was an hundred years old. He scorned to fly with the rest, and chose rather to fall into the hands of the enemy; though he had nothing to expect but exquisite torments. What a spectacle, to see four hundred barbarians eager in tormenting an old man; who, far from complaining, treated the French with the utmost contempt, and upbraided the Hurons with having stooped to be the slaves of those vile Europeans! One of his tormentors, provoked at his invectives, stabbed him in three places, to put an end to his repeated insults. *Thou dost wrong*, said Onontague calmly to him, *to shorten my life; thou wouldst have had more time to learn to die like a man*. And are these the men whom the French and English have been conspiring to extirpate for a century past? But, perhaps, they would be ashamed to live among such models of heroism and magnanimity.

The peace of Ryswick put a sudden end to the calamities of Europe and the hostilities