

the fire-places. Added to this the continual jibes and insults showered on him by the uncouth savages for his faults in trying to speak their tongue, and we can form an idea of the life he led during his first months in New France. His success, however, was such that the following spring Charles Lalemant could write in a letter to the General of the Order: "Father de Brébeuf, a pious and prudent man, and of robust constitution, has passed a rude winter season among the savages, and has acquired an extensive knowledge of their tongue." Brébeuf had begun to show the precious talent which was later to give him such mastery over the Huron language.

The flotilla from the Huron country had reached Quebec early in 1626; the savages had bartered all their furs and were on the eve of their return homewards. This opportunity could not be lost, and rather than wait another year, Brébeuf made every effort—even urging the intervention of Champlain—to assure his passage in the canoes. He had some difficulty, however; the savages complained of his weight; a frail canoe could not carry him safely hundreds of miles against the swift currents and over the dangerous rapids of the Upper Ottawa. A few gifts solved the objections of the savage traders, and Brébeuf, accompanied by Father de Nouë and the Recollect, de la Roche de Dailon, set out over the famous Ottawa and Nipissing route to the Huron nation. After thirty days of painful effort the three men floated out