

through prayer and meditation to nerve themselves and gain new inspiration for their stern duties.

The town of St. Joseph was near the south-eastern frontier of the Huron country. For four years Father Daniel had preached here with good results. On July 4th, 1648, while many of the Indians were away with the trading party, the shrill cry "The Iroquois! the Iroquois!" broke the stillness of the early morning. The faithful priest, still in his vestments, having just celebrated Mass, refused to fly while there were souls needing his priestly ministrations. He fell, torn with arrows and a gun-shot pierced his heart. In a few minutes St. Joseph was a heap of ruins—the inhabitants either killed, fugitives or prisoners. A neighboring town shared the same fate.

Through the gap made by the destruction of these villages the Iroquois in the following March entered the heart of the Huron country unperceived. A thousand Iroquois warriors were in their midst; in vain the Jesuits tried to rouse the besotted Hurons; it was as if a prescience of their coming ruin were upon them paralyzing their energies. St. Ignace was next attacked; its devastation was the work of a few moments and the invaders sped on to the next town St. Louis. Here were the two priests Jean Bre'beuf and Charles Lalement; their converts besought them to fly; but their "post was in the teeth of danger, to cheer on those who fought and to open Heaven to those who fell." The Hurons brought to bay fought bravely behind the palisades; but at length the Iroquois broke through the defences, capturing all the survivors, the Jesuits among the number. The town was set on fire and many helpless wretches were consumed in their burning dwellings. "The Iroquois," says Parkman, next fell upon Bre'beuf and Lalement, bound them fast and led them with the other prisoners back to St. Ignace. In the afternoon Bre'beuf was led apart and bound to a stake, he all the while exhorting his captive converts to suffer patiently, promising them Heaven as their reward. The Iroquois, incensed, scorched him from head to foot to silence him; but he still held his tall form erect and defiant, with no sound nor sign of pain. They then led out Lalement that Bre'beuf might see him tortured, having tied strips of bark smeared with pitch about his body. Seeing the condition of his Superior, Lalement cried out with a broken voice in the words of St. Paul, "We are made a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men." Then he threw himself at Bre'beuf's feet: upon which the Iroquois seized him, tied him to a stake and set fire to the bark that enwrapped him. Next they hung a collar made of hatchets heated red hot around Bre'beuf's neck, but the indomitable priest stood like a rock. A renegade Huron called out to pour hot water on their heads since they had poured so much cold water on those of others. Accordingly boiling water was poured slowly on the heads of the two missionaries. "We baptize you," they cried, "that you may be happy in Heaven, for nobody can be saved

(you say) without a good baptism." At last when their barbarities were exhausted they scalped Bre'beuf, laid open his breast and drank his blood thinking to imbibe with it some of his courage. Thus died Jean de Bre'beuf, the chief founder of the Huron Mission, its truest hero and its greatest martyr. Never had the mailed barons of his noble line confronted a fate so appalling with so prodigious a constancy; his death was an astonishment even to his murderers. Lalement, physically weak from childhood, was buoyed up with a zeal equal to Bre'beuf's: after being led back to the house he was tortured all night, until in the morning one of the Iroquois growing tired of the entertainment killed him with a hatchet. The bodies of the two missionaries were afterwards carried by the survivors of the massacre to St. Marie and buried in the cemetery. But the skull of Bre'beuf was preserved as a relic, his family in France sending a silver bust of their martyred kinsman, in the base of which was a recess to contain his skull; and to this day the bust and the relic may be seen at the Hotel-Dieu, Quebec.

The ruin of the Hurons was complete; within a fortnight after the disasters at St. Ignace and St. Louis, fifteen Huron towns were abandoned, many of them being burned lest they should shelter the Iroquois. The Hurons as a nation ceased to exist; some of the survivors hid themselves on the rocks and islands of Lake Huron; others sought asylum among kindred tribes. The good fathers, their flock scattered, abandoned St. Marie, their last stronghold, and following a considerable band of Hurons with their chiefs found shelter on Christian Island, which may be seen as the steamer passes north from Collingwood. Here, besides trying to comfort and console the poor fugitives, they aided in fortifying the town which had been hastily built, and erected a small chapel. As the winter drew on some 6,000 or 8,000 expatriated wretches were gathered under the protection of the fort. Alas! the Iroquois were not the only enemy of these doomed Indians. Before spring a terrible pestilence broke out and aided the work of famine, and soon one-half of their number were dead.

At last, in the spring of 1650, after ineffectual efforts to get food from the mainland, the chiefs and a portion of the Hurons decided to go with the missionaries to Quebec and to form there a church under the protection of the French. To-day the only remnant of this lost people may be seen at Indian Lorette, a little village about four miles from Quebec—"harmless weavers of baskets and sewers of moccasins"—the Huron blood fast bleaching out of them as with every generation they mingle and fade away with the French population around. But the memory of the heroic Jesuit martyrs will be perpetuated in the church which (as we have said) is being rapidly completed not far from the spot where their bodies were interred.

And now, ere closing this page of Canadian History, let us ask what was it that enabled these