

over western Pennsylvania to the mountains of Virginia. On the north, they maintained unconquered a war of two hundred years. On the east, their neighbors sought safety in peace. No confederacy of native tribes, equally powerful, ever existed between the Atlantic and the Mississippi.

As in all wars, the fortunes of this sanguinary contest were variable. In the early part of the seventeenth century, victory appears to have been with the northern tribes, for they forced the Iroquois back from the outlet of Lake Champlain to the head waters of the Hudson. From this position the Iroquois villages were never again advanced. The Champlain valley was left a broad frontier, over which invading parties passed, and upon which they met in fierce encounter. In the absence of Indian towns, it became a nursery for game, through which the larger animals roamed in countless numbers. The reason is thus apparent why so few remains of Indian towns are found in western Vermont, and why the evidences of aboriginal occupation indicate routes or war paths instead of local stations.

Champlain made two visits to this valley, upon each occasion in company with a war party. Arrived at Quebec in 1609, he made an engagement with the Algonkins, that they should assist his discoveries in the country of the Iroquois, if he would assist them in their war "against that fierce people, who spared nothing that belonged to them."<sup>(1)</sup> In the singularly minute and truthful relation of his first expedition, he records the first meeting in this region between the opposing forces of barbarism and civilization. It occurred on the northern extremity of Crown Point, on the 29th of July, two hundred and sixty-three years ago.

The parties were large—the battle fierce—its fortunes wavering, when it was decided by the arquebuss of Champlain—the first report of a fire-arm which awoke the echoes of that valley.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Champlain's Voyages, Ed. 1632, p. 134.