

aboriginal owners, the red men, with whom he had entered into brotherhood and alliance offensive and defensive.

In 1748 the Ohio Trading Company was projected ; but no sooner did the French Governor, Galissonniere, hear of the movement than he entered a protest by a special messenger sent with a letter to the Governor of Pennsylvania, at the same time giving instructions to DeBienville, one of his officers, to take a guard of three hundred men and take possession of all the country west of the Alleghany mountains. This officer was also instructed to negotiate with their Indian allies an arrangement which would exclude all British traders from the Ohio valley, and thus confine the trade in beaver skins and pelts to the French and their Indian allies.

As evidence of priority in possession, plates of lead, on which, by stamping, the arms of France were engraved, were buried at various points, and formal documents were drawn up recording the fact. Further to enforce their claims, the Governor established a chain of forts, by building new ones and strengthening the old ones, such as Detroit, Niagara, Toronto and Ogdensburg, between the Ohio valley and Montreal.

These movements were by no means satisfactory to the English, however they were regarded by the French fur traders. These traders were comprised of the Indians proper, the officials and the *coureurs de bois*. The first and third class naturally disliked every restriction which bound them to trade in a certain channel ; and, ignorant as they were in many respects, they were well aware that it was often to their advantage to evade the jurisdiction of the farmers of the revenue at Quebec. As to the second class, the official traders, they were often in league with the *coureurs de bois* for the purpose of evading the exactions of the King's revenue agents.

Bent regarded the matter as a most contemptible interference with the well known ownership of the Six Nations, and the untrammelled freedom of forest life and liberty. Upon this subject he was having a quiet talk with his dusky brother, Okwaho, as they sat on the prostrate tree trunk.

"I'll tell you just how it is," said Bent ; "these Frenchers are never satisfied ; they want to get all the West, and when they have built their forts and towns, they will want to come East and make the Mohawks into Huron dogs to fetch and carry for them. Okwaho, did not your fathers hunt in the valley of the Ohio long before the French crossed Erie ?"

"My brother," said the Chief, "knows the sayings of our wise men, and he knows that when the Six Nations found that the French were liars and broke their treaties, cheated the messengers, and sent our warriors into bondage, we then said to the English, 'we like you better than the French, and if you will do right by us we will trade and hunt with you.' Your people, Oghkwari, and ours have sometimes quarrelled, but they were brothers and agreed again. Your nation are braves, but they are not always wise in the council chamber."

"That is spoken like a wise man speaks ; you are a great Chief, Okwaho, and know how to talk and how to fight. We have hunted across the Alleghanies and through the western prairies before these