

The Iroquois were like the Romans in many points of their character and policy. Among these were their indomitable spirit of freedom, their martial energy, their military policy, their lofty bearing, their stirring eloquence, and their all-grasping ambition. As conquests accumulated, their vanquished enemies were incorporated into their own tribes, to supply the ravages of war ; and those were kept in rigorous vassalage. Tributes of wampum, shell-fish, and other articles of value, were periodically exacted from these conquered nations with the utmost promptitude, and the penalty of death was affixed to the failure of their payment. The warriors cherished a sort of Spartan discipline throughout their confederacy. The young barbarians were urged to emulate, and often advanced to, the dignity of their fathers. They were taught to hunt the wild beasts almost before their muscles were sufficiently strong to bend the bow, and to undergo the deprivations of hunger and cold in remote forests, in order to harden them for arms. Their character was constituted of all those elements which in civilized or savage life produce success, founded on cunning or courage. They were equally crafty and ferocious. They could crawl, unseen, along the track of their enemies, or rush down upon the French, in fearless bands of naked and gigantic warriors.

The alledged ground of controversy with the other tribes, on the part of the Iroquois, was generally the violation of boundary lines, the rights of embassy, and individual wrongs ; but the love of dominion and glory stimulated their conquests through the wilderness. That they regarded the inroads of the whites upon their territory with jealousy, there can be no doubt. There is as little doubt that their ancient feuds with the Hurons and Algonquins, their prejudices and their caprice, as well as the policy which was exercised towards them by the French, induced them to join the English ; and it is well known that their marches against the French Colonists and the remote missionary posts, were like the rushing of a tornado through the forest. "We may guide the English to our Lakes. We are born free. We neither depend on Onondio nor Corlaer, (France or England,)" said