

soup out of lean pork and a few herbs. Having no money, it was by a piece of good luck that the nuns obtained one faithful retainer, who having been cured of an injury under their care, devoted himself to their service for the rest of his days. Montreal was not palisaded, and at first the hospital was as much exposed as the rest. The Iroquois skulked at night among the houses, and sometimes crouched in a growth of rank mustard in the garden of the nuns, hoping that one of them would come within reach of the tomahawk. During summer a night rarely passed without a fight, sometimes within sight of their windows. A burst of yells from the ambushed marksmen, followed by musketry, announced the opening of the fray. Then, as a nun who had joined them after their arrival relates, they bore themselves according to their several natures. She and Sister Brisoles would run to the belfry and ring the tocsin. Sister Maillet would faint, and Sister Macé would remain speechless. They would both get into a corner of the wood-loft, before the Holy Sacrament, so as to be prepared for death, or else go into their cells. This, however, did not hinder Sister Brisoles at least from ministering to the wounded when they were brought in. Not only as nurses, but as religious teachers and general ministers of mercy, the nuns of Montreal have left a bright trace in the records of what may be called our primæval civilization.

It is not wonderful that this life, with its religious fervour and its hourly perils, should have generated a number of miracles, that blazing canoes crossed the skies, and that a landslip along the St. Lawrence should have seemed to the excited imaginations of the people a prodigious earthquake, in which, according to the narrative of a nun, a man ran all night to escape from a fissure in the earth which pursued him as he fled.

The Iroquois might well be regarded as limbs of Satan, and the war against them assumed the character of a crusade. Mr.

Parkman has told very gracefully the story of seventeen young Frenchmen who, having bound themselves to each other by religious vows, went up the St. Lawrence to meet the Iroquois, who were then meditating a grand attack upon the colony, and sustained a memorable *siege* in a palisade against the whole force of the enemy. We were tempted to transcribe this story; but a doubt occurred to us as to the authenticity of the details on which its interest depends. Mr. Parkman has no doubt correctly followed his Jesuit authorities. But all the Frenchmen perished, and the only informants apparently were some Hurons who had deserted before the catastrophe. Even if their knowledge had been more complete, it is hardly credible that these savages should have furnished materials for the exciting and romantic narrative which is reproduced in the pages of Mr. Parkman. There is no doubt, however, that Daulac and his comrades earned the meed of heroes.

During the last period of feudal turbulence, the period of Mazarin and the Fronde, the Colonists were left to their own resources, the French Government having enough to do in maintaining its own existence. But when above the wreck of feudalism rose the despotic and centralized monarchy of Louis XIV., extraordinary energy was inspired (though, as soon appeared, at the cost of the future) into all Departments of the Administration, and the Colonial Department among the rest. The Governor, Tracy, brought out with him a glittering retinue of young French nobles, gorgeous in ribbons, lace, and wigs, who formed a procession of unwonted splendour, when they marched up the hill at Quebec. What was more to the purpose, he brought with him a French regiment. It was now determined to strike a telling blow against the savages, and an expedition of thirteen hundred men was organized under Tracy himself, against the Mohawk towns. It was about as hard a service as ever men went on. The expedition set out on the day of the Exaltation