

river, and not beyond it, as "some map" lays it down, (Champlain's, doubtless,) were most of the "bourgs" of the Neutral Nation. There were three or four on the other side towards the Eries. Lalemant claims, and there is no doubt as to the fact, that the French were the first Europeans to become acquainted with the Neutrals. The Hurons and Iroquois were sworn enemies to each other, but in a wigwam or even a camp of the Neutrals until recently each had been safe from the other's vengeance.

Latterly however the unbridled fury of the hostile nations had not respected even the neutral ground of their mutual friends. Friendly as they were to the Hurons and Iroquois, the Neutrals engaged in cruel wars with other nations to the west, particularly the Nation of Fire, as has been stated above. The previous year a hundred prisoners had been taken from the latter tribe. This year, returning with 2,000 warriors, the Neutrals had carried off more than 170. Fiercer than the Hurons, they burned their female prisoners. Their clothing and mode of living differed but little from those of the Hurons. They had Indian corn, beans and pumpkins in equal abundance. Fish were abundant, different species being met with in different places. The country was a famous hunting ground. Elk, deer, wild cats, wolves, "black beasts" (squirrels) beaver and other animals valuable for their skins and flesh; were in abundance. It was a rare thing to see more than half a foot of snow. This year there was more than three feet. The deep snow had facilitated the hunting, and, in happy contrast with the famine which had prevailed, meat was plentiful. They had also multitudes of wild turkeys which went in flocks through the fields and woods. Fruits were no more plentiful than amongst the Hurons, except that chestnuts abounded, and wild apples were a little larger.

Their manners and customs, and family and political government, were very much like those of the other Indian tribes, but they were distinguished from the Hurons by their greater dissoluteness and indecency. On the other hand they were taller, stronger and better formed.

Their burial customs were peculiar, although similar customs are reported at this day amongst some African tribes. The bodies remained in their wigwams until decomposition rendered