

them, that, situated as they were between two European nations, each powerful enough to destroy them, and both interested in their destruction, when they no longer stood in need of their assistance, they could take no better measure than to prevent the one from being victorious over the other. This system, which seemed to be dictated by the same kind of deep policy as that which directs the balance of Europe, determined the Iroquois to return to their respective homes under various pretences. Their defection obliged the English to relinquish the enterprise, and retreat; and the Canadians, now in security on their lands, united all their forces with as much unanimity as success for the defence of their two principal towns. The Iroquois, from motives of policy, stifled their resentment against the French, and were attached rather to the name than to the interests of England. The peace of Ryswick, however, put a sudden end to the calamities of Europe and the hostilities in Canada. The Hurons and the Iroquois, as well as the French and English, were sensible that they required a long continuance of peace, to repair the losses they had sustained in war. The Indians began to recover themselves; the people of Montreal resumed their labours; and the fur trade carried on in this place, was more firmly established.

When the promotion of the Duke of Anjou to the throne of Charles V. spread an alarm over all Europe, and plunged it once more into the horrors of a general war, the conflagration extended beyond seas, and was rapidly advancing even to Canada, had not the Iroquois put a stop to it. Being aware that the English and French were contending to secure an alliance with them, they haughtily declared that they would take up arms against either of the two nations, which should commence hostilities against each other. This resolution was most favourable to the situation of Montreal at the time, the inhabitants of which were ill prepared for a war, and expected no assistance from the mother-country. The people of the rival settlement of New York, on the contrary, whose forces were already considerable, and received daily reinforcements, wished to prevail on the Iroquois to join with them. Their insinuations, presents, and negotiations were, however, ineffectual till 1709: at which period they succeeded in seducing the five nations; and their troops, which till then had remained inactive, marched out supported by a great number of Indian warriors. The army was confidently advancing towards Montreal, and other central places in Canada with the probability of success, when one of the chiefs of the Iroquois, who had never approved of their proceedings, plainly said to his people: "What will become of us if we succeed in driving away the French?" These few words, uttered with a mysterious and anxious look, immediately recalled to the minds of all the people their former system, which was to keep the balance even between the two foreign nations, in order to secure their own independence. They instantly resolved to relinquish a design they had been too precipitantly engaged in, contrary to the public interest; but as they thought it would be shameful openly to desert their associates, they imagined that secret treachery might serve the purpose of open defection. The lawless Savages, the virtuous Spartans, the religious Hebrews, the wise and warlike Greeks and Romans—all people, whether civilized or not, have always made what is called the right of nations consist either in craft or violence. The army had halted on the banks