

French traders have before now visited the country of the Neutrals, but we have not heard of any other priest than Rev. Father de la Roche Dullion, Recollect, who preached the gospel and passed the winter of 1626 among them. The French who were in the Neutral land at the time of his visit, returned, having heard that some of their companions in the remote places were roughly handled.

The above mentioned Father, who undertook this great journey, soon after his arrival among the Hurons, was not acquainted with their language, and, being without an interpreter, he endeavored to instruct those around him more by signs than by voice, as he himself related in one of his own printed letters. This ignorance of their language, joined to the lies which the Hurons, who feared to lose the profits of the trade they carried on with this people, circulated about him, prevented the Father from doing as much for the service of God as he desired.

Fourteen years after his return, two Fathers of our Society, who had charge of a Huron Mission, left St. Mary's November 2nd, 1640. When they arrived at St. Joseph's, or Tean Austajae, the last town of the Hurons, where they were to obtain provisions for the journey, and meet the guides, they learned that those who had promised to accompany them, failed to keep their word, so they had no other alternative than to address themselves to Heaven. After praying, Father Brebeuf met a young man who had no intention of making this journey. I do not know why the Father addressed himself to him, but he simply said: "Come with us and be our companion." This young man, without hesitating, followed them, and remained their faithful companion. Two of our Frenchmen went with them on their journey to assist them, and trade as merchants in the country, for, without this excuse, the doors of the cabins would have been closed against them, as, in fact, they afterwards were. They slept four nights in the woods, and on the fifth day arrived at the first town of the Neutral Nation, called Kandoncho, which they christened "All Saints."

As they knew something of the ill-will of these people, whose minds were poisoned with the lies and calumnies circulated

among them in other days, they deemed it prudent to wait upon the Chiefs and Elders of the tribe, present their offerings, and make known their intentions. For this reason, it was necessary to wait upon the Chief who conducted public affairs, and who was called *Tsohissien*. His town was in the middle of the country. To arrive there it was necessary to pass through other towns and villages, the doors of whose cabins were closed against the Fathers by reason of the fear which filled the people.

The name *Echon*, which is the Indian name of Father Brebeuf, was known everywhere as that of one of the most famous sorcerers or demons that they had ever heard of. The hope of a prosperous trade, however, at times pacified them, and it was owing to this expectation that the Fathers were hospitably entertained at the village of the principal Chief, where they were compelled to wait until spring for the return of the warrior who was on the war-path.

Our Fathers spoke to those who conducted affairs during his absence; made known to them their desire to preach the gospel in the country, and for this purpose wished to contract an alliance with them. In proof of the sincerity of their statement, they offered a wampum belt of 2,000 grains. The principal men, after consulting together, replied that they could not accept the gift before the return of their Chief, for, according to their custom, they would be compelled to offer gifts in return; but if we wished to wait until then, we were at liberty to do so, and give such instructions as we wished. Nothing, it would appear, could happen more opportunely, for it gave the missionaries time to converse with the older heads, and to soften the more angry spirits. But, before they began to preach, the Fathers deemed it prudent to retrace their path and escort their attendants out of the country, then return and begin their duties, which they did. But now that there was no longer a hope of barter, the Fathers were subjected to a renewal of the calumnies which had confronted them on their arrival.

The Hurons had already told these people that before *Echon* entered their country he publicly thus expressed himself: "I will remain so many years, during which