

These Indians had for many years been more or less accustomed to receive the ministrations of the Catholic Church from the Jesuit missionaries who had been sent among them, and when established in their new home at Kenté they felt the want of the services of the "Black Robes," as they called the priests, and in 1668 sent a deputation to Montreal to petition the authorities to send a missionary to them. As their application did not at first appear to be favourably received the old chief Rohiaria went himself to Montreal in the month of September to urge the needs of his people, with the result that two Sulpicians, MM. Trouvé and Fenelon, volunteered for the service. The great French statesman Jean Baptiste Colbert was at this time the moving spirit in all colonial matters under Louis XIV. He had shown a deep concern for New France and hoped to win the Indians from their savage customs by teaching them the French language and thus bringing them in closer touch with civilization, and had given instructions to Governor Courcelles to do all in his power to further this end. The missionary at this time was recognized, not only as the representative of the Church, but was expected to render certain services to the state also, and in more than one crisis proved himself to be a wise and skilful diplomat. The two Sulpicians, therefore, upon receiving the consent of their Superior to engage in the new enterprise, hastened to Quebec, obtained their appointment from Bishop Laval, and their credentials from the civil government.

These were the first official steps taken by the church and state to care for the wants of the inhabitants of the Midland District of Ontario and we have no occasion to be ashamed of the first representatives set in authority over this territory. Father Fenelon was a young man of noble birth, son of Count Fenelon-Salignac and brother of the great Archbishop of Cambray. We may rightfully boast of the many great men who have lived in the counties bordering on the Bay of Quinte; but we recall none of better lineage and fairer parts than this modest and pious Sulpician, who freely abandoned a life of comfort and luxury in France to devote his means and talents to assist in redeeming the pagan Indians of New France. It was a long move from the Court of King Louis to the wilderness of Canada, but he gladly embraced the opportunity and, full of hope and determination, completed his preparations for the journey to the new field that opened up for him at the Cayuga village.

Everything was in readiness on October 2nd, and the two priests set out from Lachine accompanied by two Cayuga guides. It was a long and tedious paddle and one that most young men not accustomed to the hardships of pioneer life would seek to escape; but the