

“that no better idea can be conceived of them than to represent these barbarians as savage beasts scattered through a vast forest, whence they ravage all the neighboring countries. The colonists assemble to give them chase, inquire their retreat, and it is everywhere; they must be awaited with your hand on the trigger, and they are long awaited. They can be hounded only with hounds, and Indians are the only dogs that can be used for the purpose; but they are failing us, and the few that we have are not to be depended on; they are afraid of approaching the enemy, and dare not provoke him. The course that has been adopted has been to build forts in each seignury as a refuge for the people and their cattle; moreover, the tilled lands lie far apart, and are so surrounded by woods, that at each field a corps of troops would be needed to support the field laborers. The sole and only means of making war was, to have troops enough to advance on the enemy by three routes at once; but to effect this would require four thousand men and provisions for two years, with four or five hundred batteaux, and all the other details of such an outfit, for to be obliged as we are to live from hand to mouth, is a sure way to build up nothing solid.”¹

1688.

The king was certainly not disposed to send to Canada the number of troops asked by the Marquis de Dénonville.² Many people even in the country were convinced, that to reduce the Iroquois, it required only a little more discipline in the troops at his disposal; and we shall see, before the close of this history, that if they did not succeed with the colonial forces alone, it was because it was not earnestly desired. It also seems that the general's alarmed imagination, or that of those to whose counsels he listened had somewhat magnified the objects; but it is certain that if the disorders of which he complained had been

Reflections
on this
letter.

¹ Abstract of dispatches: N. Y. is not the time to think of that war. Col. Doc., ix., p. 395. The king's forces are too much occupied elsewhere.” Ib.

² The minister's minute is: “This occupied elsewhere.” Ib.