

Jesuits came, disowned the twenty-five converts, and gained one of more illustrious character, the celebrated Sachem Mambertou, whom they termed the first-fruits of Acadia to the Church. They were right in putting the word *Church* in place of Him who should have been that Church's head.

In 1632 Jesuit Missionaries found their way to Quebec and Montreal, and commenced a work of evangelization among the Hurons, an important branch of the Wyandot family, of which the Iroquois and themselves are the only remaining representatives in Canada. Not content with teaching the Indians in the settlement, many of these brave and devoted men, for such, in spite of all their errors they were, followed them into the wilds, enduring the most severe hardships, and in many cases suffering cruel deaths. Slowly and painfully they worked their way up the Ottawa to the east shore of Lake Huron, and there founded the villages of St. Joseph, St. Louis, St. Ignatius and St. Mary, where a simple form of civilized life existed for a short time. At Sillery, near Quebec, civilization and religion of a more pretentious character flourished among these same people, the Hurons. These villages were centres of missionary operations, the record of which with its strange mixture of superstition, craft, cruelty, untiring energy, heroic courage and burning zeal, may be found in the "*Relations des Jesuites*." The civilization of the Hurons made them a prey to the unscrupulous and warlike Iroquois, and many are the marvellous tales of Indian martyrdom told by the fathers. The Jesuits sought out the Iroquois. In 1640 they found a poor man of this nation whom the Hurons were subjecting to cruel torture, and him they converted and baptized before his death; but their success with the Iroquois generally was very insignificant, as that warlike people adopted the British side in the great contest for Canada, and, when their attention was drawn towards it, also the religion of the British. In the meantime many of the Algonquin tribes were brought within the influence of the missions, not the least important of which was the tribe of the Abenaki, a history of whom, written by the Abbé Maurault, has been recently published at Sorel, in the Province of Quebec. It was not till the year 1830 that the doctrines of Protestantism, from the lips of Peter Paul Osunkhirhine, found their way to the hearts of the Abenakis of St. Francis. The Abbé gives Peter Paul a very bad character, and hopes "that the reading of the edifying history of the Abenaki nation may enlighten these unfortunates (the Protestant converts) and bring them back to the faith of their ancestors, which alone can save them." Not content with their large field of missionary labour, that extended from the Atlantic shores of Maine to the borders of Lake Huron, the Jesuits pushed farther into the wilds, and sought to bring the distant Sioux into outward obedience to the Gospel of Christ. "Thus" says Bancroft, "did the religious zeal of the French bear the cross to the banks of the St. Mary and the confines of Lake Superior, and look wistfully towards the homes of the Sioux in the valley of the Mississippi, five years before the New England Eliot had addressed the tribe of Indians that dwelt within six miles of Boston harbour."

The question naturally arises: What has become of all the converts whose immense numbers, the three thousand baptised in one day on Lake Huron for instance, almost make us question the veracity of the historians? What has Roman Catholicism to show for the great efforts put forth by her most devoted servants? Not, indeed, what we might be led to expect from such a beginning, but still much that should encourage the Romanists and make the Protestants more watchful and zealous. The Hurons are all