

truth is we are yet in the dark regarding the philosophy of aboriginal burials, and, perhaps will ever remain so." So that in the absence of evidence we can indulge only in conjecture.

It will be remembered that, after the four nations of the Huron Confederacy went down in red ruin beneath the merciless tomahawks of the Iroquois, the conquerors turned their victorious arms against the Neutrals or Attiwanderons; stormed and took their palisaded towns, together with hundreds of prisoners, whom they burnt or adopted, and left a trail of fire and blood along the northern shores of Lake Erie. Then they wheeled in their tracks and rushed, like a pack of famished wolves, upon the Eries or Cats, a kindred tribe to the south of Lake Erie, whom they destroyed utterly in one of the fiercest Indian battles recorded in history. Meanwhile, on the eastern frontiers of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Mohawks were at war with their Algonkin neighbors, the Mohicans, and with their own Iroquoian kinsmen, the Andastes or Conestogas. During a decade of conflict with these opposing forces, a series of bloody reverses had humbled the Mohawk arrogance, when the other four nations of the Iroquois league took up the strife, in the Andaste war. For fifteen years the Iroquois' war-parties traversed the forests towards the Susquehanna before the heroic Andastes were wasted away by the attrition of superior numbers and finally overcome by the Senecas, about the year 1675. Thus, in a period of twenty-five years, from the downfall of the Hurons to the conquest of the Andastes, the Iroquois had triumphed over all the neighboring nations and peace reigned, for a time, over the blood stained wilderness. But, during all these wars, the Confederates were able to send war-parties on the trail to Canada, that kept New France in a turmoil, by cutting off her outposts and wasting her outlying settlements. It is not likely, however, that any of these expeditions went out of their way to attack Algonkin or Huron stragglers on the Ottawa, and these fugitive bands may have remained unmolested for a few years, until their final destruction or dispersion could be made an incident in some more important enterprise of the Iroquois.

Let us now return to the Hurons. In the year 1650, after a terrible winter made horrible by famine, death and the Iroquois, the Jesuits abandoned their last mission fort of Ste. Marie on Ahoendoé—St. Joseph's or Christian Island—and led some three hundred of these unfortunate people to Quebec, by way of the Ottawa. A much larger number, however, who were left behind, were forced by the Iroquois to abandon their fort and retire to Manitoulin Island and the northern forests. But the Iroquois were on their trail; so, finally, loading their canoes, about four