

PIONEER PRIESTS OF NORTH AMERICA

tell where he had placed the treasure. When asked about it, his only answer was: "Maybe Indian need it sometime." He died with his secret, but after some time a wood-cutter found the bell in the hollow of a large pine that had been uprooted in a storm. It was taken to Norridgewock and from thence to Brunswick. It is now in the Portland Museum.

Narantsouac never rose from its ruins, but remained in the desolation in which the destroyers saw it as they turned back for the last time to gaze at its flaming wigwams. Relic hunters occasionally visited the place to dig up its soil. But the village had disappeared forever. There is, however, one interesting record of how it appeared fifty-two years after the tragedy, and singularly enough it is from the pen of no less a personage than Benedict Arnold. Fortunately it was written before the cloud of dishonor had settled on his name. Indeed he was then an ardent patriot and on his way up the Kennebec to capture Quebec. It was the year 1775.

"At a place below Norridgewock Falls," he writes, "was a wide and beautiful plain, once the site of an Indian village, from which the falls took their name, and memorable in the annals of former days, as the theatre of a tragical event in which many of the tribe were slain, in a sudden attack, and among them Father Râle, the venerable and learned missionary, who had dwelt there for twenty-six years. The foundations of a church and an altar in ruins are still visible, the only remaining memorials of a people which was once feared, and of a man who had exiled himself from all the enjoyments of civilization to plant the cross in a savage wilderness, and who lost his life in its defence. Let history tell the story as it may, and let it assign such motives as it may for the conduct of the assailants; the heart of him is little to be envied who can behold the melancholy vestiges of a race extinct, or pass by the grave of Râle without a tear of sympathy and a sigh of regret."

After some years a wooden cross was erected over Râle's