

quarter; those orbits having great eccentricity, have also generally great inclination to the ecliptic.

4. Their orbits so interlace, that, if represented materially as hoops, the orbit of one would support the orbits of all the others; in other words, they all hang together in such a manner, that the whole group may be replaced by any given one; "thus affording," says D'Arrest, "the strongest evidence of the intimate connection that exists amongst them."

Indian Tribes of Canada.

(Read before the Canadian Institute, February 10th, 1855.)

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Of the first inhabitants of the Province, and especially of the Indian tribes of Western Canada, little is known previous to the settlement of the banks of the St. Lawrence by the French. Apparently too little attention has been paid in times gone by to the preservation of those Indian traditions, which, in the absence of written records and architectural monuments, are the only materials by which an idea of the shadowy past of a nation or a race can be attained.

On the discovery of the River St. Lawrence and the colonization of the lower section of the Province, the north bank of the river, between Quebec and the Ottawa, was occupied by the Algonquin or Adirondack race of Indians. In close alliance with these were the Wyandots or Quatoghies, a tribe of a different stock to the Algonquin—it being a kindred one to the Iroquois. Between the Wyandots and the other Iroquois tribes there existed a deadly feud. On the arrival of Jacques Cartier, the discoverer of the St. Lawrence in 1534, the Wyandots occupied the lower part of the river on the south bank, as far as the Island of Anticosti and the Bay of Chaleurs.

With the Algonquin tribes and the Wyandots the Iroquois Indians waged an incessant warfare, and eventually drove them from the valley of the St. Lawrence—a few only of each tribe remaining there. The bulk of the Algonquins drew off to the north-west, near Lake Nipissing; the Ottawas of the Algonquin stock, who at that time lived also on the banks of the St. Lawrence, migrated to the great chain of the Manitoulin Islands in Lake Huron, and the Wyandots fled to the shores of the same lake, to which they communicated the name they had received from the French, being called by them Hurons.

At the same period came some others of the tribes of the Algonquin stock, and occupied the country between Lakes Huron and Superior and the river Ottawa. The chief and most prominent amongst these are the Chippewas or Ojibwas. These Indians, the most numerous and the most widely spread, were of the true Algonquin race. These are believed, at a comparatively recent period, to have been sub-divided into smaller tribes or divisions, bearing some local name, and differing scarcely in any perceptible degree in language, looks, and customs. Of these the Mississaugas, or Mississaguas, the Indian occupants of the northern shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie, and the Bay of Quinté, were situated most to the south. Their language is pure Algonquin; and they were designated Mississaugas from the fact of their inhabiting the banks of a river of that name, on the north shore of Lake Huron, between La Cloche and Point Tessalon. Spreading southwards from thence, in 1653, they are stated to have extended to the tract of country lying between the Niagara and Genesee rivers, south of Lake Ontario. This could not have continued for any extended period, for they must thus have been intruding on the

territory especially claimed by the Iroquois confederacy, with whom the Mississaugas, in common with the other Algonquin races, were embroiled in incessant warfare.

And many a spot by lake and river, on headlands and on islands, bore witness in those days to the fell conflict, and re-echoed the startling war-whoop, traces of which struggles in many places remain to this day. In the great Indian and Colonial struggle which raged with such violence during the seventeenth century, and in which the Algonquin tribes and the Wyandots were ranged on one side, supporting the French dominion in North America, and the Five Nations of the Iroquois confederacy were opposed to it, the Eries, a tribe of the same stock as the latter, and inhabiting the banks of the Niagara river and the south shore of Lake Erie, occupied a neutral position, and hence were designated by the French, the Neutral Nation. They eventually offended their kindred of the Five Nations, which led to a war of extermination, that ended in the year 1653. Since that event not a remnant of them has been heard of.

During this period, and a long time previously to this, the Canadian frontier and the shores of Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinté more especially became the great battle-field of the Indians of the rival races of the Algonquin and Iroquois confederacies, and it formed a sort of debatable ground, which continued more or less until the final conquest of Canada, and the overthrow of the French dominion in North America. In 1672 Fort Frontenac, at the mouth of the river Catararqui, at the outlet of Lake Ontario, was built by that able and energetic Governor of Canada, Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac; and this post became a centre of action, from whence the influence of the French was extended in military, trading, and missionary operations to the surrounding country. Thus, in the course of time, Fort Frontenac became the general resort and rendezvous of the Northern and Western tribes of Indians, and the centre of their trade with the French. From all directions they repaired thither, even, it is said, from the distance of 1000 miles, bearing with them the produce of the chase, the rich spoils of the hunter and trapper, to exchange for European goods. From Fort Frontenac, le Salle and de Tonti, with the Recollect Fathers, Louis Hennipen, Membre, and Watteax, sailed westward towards the Mississippi in 1679, and first saw and described the Falls of Niagara.

The former occupants of Western Canada were, as we have seen, then chiefly of the Mississauga tribe, and these, with others of the Chippewa race and Algonquin stock, and their associate tribe, the Wyandots or Hurons, of the Iroquois stock, may be said to have been those who occupied the Province previously and subsequent to its first colonization by the French, and indeed to its subjection to British rule and enterprise. The Five Nations of the Iroquois confederacy, viz., the Mohawks, Cayugas, Oneidas, Onondagas, and Senecas, having their territory originally comprehended in the present State of New York, though they have had the majority of their tribes settled within the Province since the war of the American Revolution, yet they cannot be considered as the aborigines of Canada, but as refugee Loyalist Indians. Their confederacy was increased by the addition of the Tuscaroras in 1712, and thus they formed the Six Nations. There is, indeed, a tradition that these Iroquois came from beyond the great Lakes, and subdued or exterminated the inhabitants of the country south of them, but there is an uncertainty respecting this, and it proves nothing respecting their origin, for the time might have been when the ancestors of these passed from the south to the country north of the Lakes.