

ri-son of 4,000 warriors, with a total population of 12,000. The first breach of the Covenant was followed by a truce for nine years.

Their history, rise, spread and power and final fall is involved in a degree of obscurity which is all the more stimulating from the few gleams of tradition given. There is no doubt that the Institution of the Pipe of Peace Council must have been subject to a very delicate exercise of authority, and which was also often fluctuating in its power, it was finally overthrown by some indiscreet act. The power to light this pacific fire is represented as having been held by a woman, and after its final extinction in the area of western New York, it was equally clear that hereafter it began to flicker. It was finally put out in terrible bloodshed by the increasing and conquering Five Nations. The fate of the Eries has excited deep interest, and they are still brought to mind by the noble lake and its noted outlet the Falls of Niagara, the lake which still bears their once distinguished name.

They possessed twelve large forts, which were similar to the cities of refuge of the children of Israel. The country was noted for its fertility, game of every kind abounded, and fruits of sunny France flourished in the open air. The Eries were regarded as the Pacificators or Peace Councilors of the many tribes and confederacies which waged war so furiously one with another north, south, east and west of them. In the year 1626 they were ruled by Queen Yag-ownea, "Mother of Nations."

She was called "Gegosasa" by the French and Senecas. They spoke a dialect of the old Huron-Iroquois race, in morale and religious belief, that of living under a Theocracy, they also agreed with these Romans of the New world. The Eries occupied geographically a significant position, their territory lay intermediate between all contending parties—red and white—the various Indian confederacies, as well as the rival European powers in the race for supremacy on the continent. They had already from propinquity and from a certain community of habit, and in spite of their supposed perfectly established neutrality between the powers, been drawn into a secret friendship with the Mississagies who dwelt on the west and north of Lake Ontario. Totemic ties of consanguinity, as well as the sacred trust of Kindler of the Peace fires of the continent, should have kept Gegosasa true to her guardianship and faithful to her vows of vir-