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Charles Garnier

VICTIM OF THE IROQUOIS

1605-1649



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CHARLES GARNIER

VICTIM OF THE IROQUOIS

CHARLES Garnier was the son of a rich and noble Parisian family; he was born on the feast of the Annunciation, March 25th, 1605 (or 1606), and from his earliest years he was singled out as one on whom God had lofty designs. His innocence of life, coupled with a frank and manly character, gave him a prestige which imposed respect among the companions of his own age. While he was a student in the Jesuit college in his native city, his father was accustomed to give him a few pieces of silver every month, either as a reward for his application to study or to enable him to gratify his personal fancies; but the boy rarely applied this money to his own use, preferring to throw it into the almsbox of one of the city prisons, the Petit Chatelet. One day, while crossing the Pont Neuf in Paris, Charles saw an impious book for sale. With his small monthly allowance he purchased the volume and destroyed it, "lest some one by reading it might offend God." His horror of everything that could wound the Heart of God he attributed to the love he had for our Lady whom he called his Mother and to whom he gave all his confidence. "It was she,"

His early years and education

he asserted in after-life, "who carried me in her arms during my youthful years; it was she who called me to the Society of her Son."¹

This call to the religious profession was promptly answered by the young man; Charles decided to consecrate his life to God's service in the Society of Jesus. Monsieur Garnier, who evidently had other plans in view for his son, opposed this pious design and endeavored to dissuade Charles from the irrevocable step. He yielded, however, after he had been convinced that his son was not the plaything of a passing illusion; and nobly did he make the sacrifice. When the moment of separation came, he told the superiors of the Order that he was giving them a child, "who from his birth had never committed the least disobedience, and never caused him the least displeasure."²

Charles Garnier entered the Jesuit novitiate in Paris, on September 5th, 1624, and soon became a model of exact observance of the rule. His angelic modesty shone in a face beaming with happiness; he was held up as a "mirror of holiness" to those around him. So deep was the impression Garnier made on his fellow religious that all felt that his was a favored soul and that God had other gifts in store for him. After the young novice had completed his term of probation and pronounced his vows, in 1626, he was sent to study in the college of Clermont, one of the chief

**He enters the
Jesuit Order**

¹ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. xxxv, p. 119.

² *Ibid.*, p. 145.

institutions of the Jesuit Order in France. From 1629 to 1632 he taught in the college of Eu, returning to Clermont only in the latter year to study theology and prepare himself for the priesthood, a dignity he was raised to in 1635.

The missions of Canada had begun to attract the young religious. The perusal of the letters sent back by his Jesuit brethren from those distant shores, the accounts of the spiritual conquests which were being made among the savage tribes, the pathetic call for more laborers in the vineyard, had set his heart afire. His superiors, to whom he had confided his secret longing, were willing to give full scope to Charles Garnier's zeal, and would have allowed him

His vocation to the missions

to leave France for Canada immediately after his ordination in 1635, but "having desired that his father should give his consent on account of special obligations to him which the Order was under," they delayed his departure. This delay only served to augment the young priest's desire for the mission-field beyond the Atlantic. His one thought day and night was the conversion of the savages and the prospect of life among them. The permission to sail, however, was granted in 1636, and he quitted the shores of France in the fleet which brought out Monsieur de Montmagny, the successor of Champlain, as governor of New France. During the voyage he seized the opportunity of effecting a remarkable conversion. Among the members of the crew was a sailor "without conscience, without religion and without God," who had not gone to confession for

over ten years, a dereliction of Christian duty that was looked on as tragic in that age of faith and practice. The unhappy man was avoided by every one on board until Father Garnier, urged by his zeal for souls, took him in hand. After many kind services and delicate attentions he succeeded in winning him over, heard his confession, and restored him to the friendship of God. This conversion brought such peace and joy of conscience to the poor sailor that the hearts of all on board were touched.¹

This edifying incident helped to shorten what was already a remarkably rapid voyage across the ocean.

The vessel, with M. de Montmagny, entered the Gulf, sailed up the St. Lawrence and arrived at Quebec on June 11th, 1636.

**He arrives in
New France**

The governor, "having arrived before Kebec on the night of St. Barnabas," wrote LeJeune "he cast anchor without announcing himself; the next morning we had word that he was in the vessel which the darkness had hidden from us. We went down to the shore of the river to receive him and found that Father Peter Chastelain and Father Charles Garnier were in his company."² The two young missionaries were present at his solemn installation and had the privilege of witnessing the profound Catholic faith of the second governor of New France, "Monsieur de Champlain," continued LeJeune, "having left us during the last year of his ministration to go to Heaven, we were anxious as to what zeal his successor would

¹ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. xxxv, p. 121.

² *Ibid.* vol. viii, p. 217.

have for this infant Church... If first actions are prognostications of those to come, we have reason to thank God in the person of Monsieur de Montmagny. One of his first acts, after the usual installation festivities were ended, was to stand sponsor for a savage about to be baptized." When invited to fill this function, the pious governor very willingly accepted and "rejoiced in his good fortune that in beginning his official life he could help to open the door of the Church to a poor soul who wished to enter the fold of Jesus Christ."¹ The Father who had prepared the savage asked Father Chastelain whether he would not be glad to begin his labors in New France with a baptism. The newly arrived missionary accepted the offer with the greatest alacrity, and it is easy to surmise that Father Garnier, his companion on the voyage, assisted at this consoling ceremony.

Being destined for the mission on Georgian Bay, the sojourn of the two Jesuits in Quebec was of short duration, and on July 1st, Chastelain and Garnier, with two other Jesuits, Buteux and Quentin, embarked for Three Rivers, a mission which had been founded by Paul LeJeune two years before, and which had become the terminus of the Huron flotillas from the West. Governor de Montmagny escorted the four men to the river bank, "with matchless courtesy and affection," and had three cannon shots fired as a farewell salute at their departure. They travelled up the St. Lawrence, Buteux and Chastelain in one canoe and

¹ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. VIII, p. 219.

Quentin and Garnier in the other, and received at Three Rivers such a cordial welcome from Father LeJeune that "the demonstration of affection impressed the natives present." A feast next day completely won the savage hearts and, as we shall see, made the route to the Huron Country smoother for the missionaries. While at Three Rivers Father Garnier had a consolation similar to the one Chastelain experienced at Quebec; he was initiated into his ministry in Canada by baptizing a little Indian girl on July 7th, 1636.

On the twenty-first of the same month they embarked in their canoes and started for Huronia—"the happiest men in the world," the *Relation* recorded.¹

He starts for the Huron country Their passage was so easily secured—and yet "the affairs of God are generally so crossed at the beginning," LeJeune remarked—that it was almost suspected something had gone wrong. The missionaries, however, were treated well on the way. In the first place they were allowed to wear their shoes. This was a special privilege, for usually the Jesuits were obliged to travel bare-footed lest they should deposit sand or dirt in the small canoes. In cold or hot weather they had to adapt themselves to this custom unless they met with savages kind enough to let them follow their own. They enjoyed another privilege in not being obliged to paddle. This favor they evidently appreciated, for the *Relation* of 1636 remarked, "it is hard work, especially at first, when

¹ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. ix, l. 247.

one is not accustomed to it... We give to every canoe in which any of our Fathers embark a large sheet which serves as a sail to relieve them from this work, but although these barbarians are told that the sail is the Fathers' paddle, and they do not wield any other, they do not fail sometimes to make them take a wooden one, which has to be well worked to satisfy them."¹

A canoe full of savages on their way to Three Rivers met them at Petite Nation² on the Ottawa, and Garnier seized the occasion to drop a note to Father Le-Jeune. "The bearer of this," he wrote, "will tell you better than we can the name of the place where they met us. We are in good health, thank God, and gliding along swiftly in our bark gondolas. We are flying to our long sought Paradise with an increase of courage which God had given us."³ He had a kind word for

**Happenings
on the route**

Kionche and Aenons, the two savages who had charge of their canoes. Chastelain, in his turn, wrote when they reached Lake Nipissing, August 8th: "We have been here since yesterday among the Nipissings, so happy and in such good health that I am quite ashamed of it; for if I had had heart and courage enough, I feel that God would have given me a bit of His cross to bear, as he has done to our Fathers who have been over this route before us. If He had done me this

¹ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. ix i. p. 243.

² This was an Algonquin reserve in the seventeenth century. The name, "Petite Nation," is still preserved.

³ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. ix., 251.

favor I would be a little more cast down than I am. May He be blessed by all the angels! He has treated a child like a child; I did not paddle; I carried only my own baggage, except three days at the portages, when I carried a little package that some one offered me because one of our savages was ill... We arrived at the (Allumette) Island on the eve of St. Ignatius (July 30th); our peas having given out, we bought some Indian corn. This corn lasted us until we reached here."¹ Evidently God was waiting His own good time; the young missionary would soon have other opportunities of suffering and thus make up for the easy journey to Georgian Bay. Garnier reached Huronia on the 13th of August and went direct to Ihonatiria; Chastelain had arrived there the day before. Both men had gone to devote their lives and labors for the salvation of the Hurons and naturally were received with joy by Father de Brébeuf and his brethren already there.

Unhappily, this joy was shortlived and threatened to turn to sorrow. Early in September, 1636, a mysterious illness, which the *Relation* called "purple fever," attacked the village of Ihonatiria and incapacitated both white men and savages. Father Isaac Jogues, a recent arrival in the country, was the first victim and nearly succumbed; the next was Chastelain who received the last Sacraments. Father Garnier was a witness of this domestic affliction, and al-

¹ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. ix, p. 127.

though occupied with the exercises of his yearly retreat, he asked to be allowed to interrupt them so that he might aid the patients. His physical strength, however, was not as great as his charity; he, too, was seized with the fever, and the little residence at Ihonatiria became for the nonce a hospital. The sufferings of the sick, occasioned by a lack of skilled medical attention and the accompaniments of poverty, were severe. "If a bed of feathers," wrote Father Le Mercier to LeJeune, "often seems hard to a sick person, I leave it to Your Reverence to imagine if he could rest easily upon a bed which was nothing but a mat of rushes spread over some bark and at most a blanket or a piece of skin thrown over it." Yet "one and all were never more cheerful; the sick were as content to die as to live, and by their patience, piety and devotion greatly lightened the little trouble we took for them night and day."¹ Blood-letting, the panacea for so many ills in the seventeenth century, was freely resorted to, the sick missionaries recovered slowly and continued their work among the savages.

Ihonatiria was the first really permanent mission the Jesuits had in Huronia; it was situated in the immediate neighborhood of what is now Todd's Point, in Simcoe County,² and had been established two years previously, in 1634. A large cabin serving as

¹ *Jesuit Relations*, Clev. edit., vol. XIII, p. 99.

² Lot 6, concession XX, XXI. Tiny township. (Cf. Jones' *Old Huronia*, pp. 28-31.)

chapel and dwelling had been built; the Fathers had gained the sympathy of the Hurons, and were actively occupied in catechising there. The location, however, was not deemed central enough, and it was decided to go elsewhere at the first favorable opportunity. Ossossane, the principal village of the Bear clan, appeared to Brébeuf to be a more favorable center for a mission. He had already marked the spot, but the frequent changes of the sites of Huron villages, prompted usually by scarcity of fuel, poverty of the soil, or stress of war, prevented him for the moment from making the transfer. Although Ossossane never moved far from where it originally stood, it had already changed its site three times,¹ and Brébeuf did not care to risk the expense involved in the construction of a church and house which might be after all only temporary. However, in the spring of 1637 he suggested to the Hurons of that village his project of migrating thither from Ihonatiria. Not merely was the proposal accepted, but the savages even offered to build a cabin for the Fathers. So rapidly were operations carried out that, a month later, Brébeuf could write: "Since my last letter (dated May 20th), a new residence of the Immaculate Conception has been established, and we began to occupy it on the feast of SS. Primus and Felician, martyrs, June 9th... Forty or fifty Indians, men and women,

¹ The successive sites of Ossassane lay in the neighborhood of Varwood Point, on Nottawasaga Bay. (Cf. Jones' *Old Huronia*, p. 27.)

came to Ihonatiria to fetch our grain and our few pieces of furniture."¹ Ossossane, also called La Rochelle by the French fur-traders from some fancied resemblance to the seaport of that name in France, became a center of intense missionary activity, and remained such during its short existence, that is, until the completion of the central residence, Fort Ste. Marie, in 1639.

In a letter, a year later, to his brother Henry, a Carmelite friar in Paris, Father Garnier wrote: "I must tell you how the time was spent since I wrote you last year. I was at that time at the little village of Ihonatiria; I came hither a few days after Corpus Christi... There are forty Indian lodges, and ours bears the name of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady."² One of his letters to his father, in the same city, gives us a lively description of Ossossane.

**Goes to live at
Ossossane**

"You must know," he wrote, "that we are here living in a fortress which has nothing like it in France. We are encircled by a wall quite different from that of the Bastille. Yesterday they completed one of the towers, and we stand less in dread of Spanish cannon than you do in Paris. But I fear that some cunning fellow will be ready to tell you that it is because cannon can scarcely be brought nearer here than some three hundred leagues, that our ramparts consist of an enclosure of

1 Carayon: *Première mission des Jésuites au Canada*, p. 161. Paris, 1864.

2 Garnier's Letters, p. 38.

posts ten or twelve feet high and half a foot thick, and posts that our tower is made up of some thirty odd planted at one angle of the ramparts so as to command two of the sides of the enclosure, and that another will be built to defend the other two... It will be enough to put you on your guard against such eavesdroppers if I tell you that the Hurons admire

**He describes
the spot**

our fortification, and imagine that those in France are modelled on about the same pattern. You see how different their ideas are from ours. This is why I have gained much by leaving France where you used to twit me for not having any beard, for the Indians on that account think me handsome."¹ The witty word or joyous comment, denoting Father Garnier's sprightly character as well as his desire to give a moment of pleasure to dear ones beyond the sea, was frequently displayed in his correspondence. And yet the letters from his pen which have been preserved for us, breathe a sweet resignation amid sufferings that were acute and dangers that were always imminent.

The arrival of new laborers in the vineyard urged the Jesuits to extend their activities and carry the Word of Life as soon as possible to the neighboring settlements. They established themselves at Teanastaye the chief town of the Cord clan, they went from village to village, instructing and baptizing children and adults in danger of death, and would have continued to do so indefinitely had not the incursions

1 Garnier's Letters, p. 26.

of the Iroquois become more frequent and threatening, and obliged them to provide for their own security and that of their neophytes who were gradually increasing in numbers. A strongly fortified residence, where they could retire in the hours of danger, was considered necessary, but the funds to build it were evidently lacking. The French government was indirectly appealed to, nor was the appeal made in vain, for we learn from a letter written by Paul LeJeune to Mutius Vitelleschi, General of the Jesuits, in 1642, that Cardinal Richelieu, at the request of his niece, the Duchess d'Aiguillon, granted thirty thousand *livres* from the Royal treasury for the construction of a fort in Huronia strong enough to withstand the attacks of hostile savages. This fort, known as Fort Ste. Marie, the foundations of which are still visible after nearly three centuries, was built on the east bank of a little stream¹ connecting Lake Isiargui with Georgian Bay. When it was completed in 1639, it became the headquarters of the Huron missionaries; Ossossane was abandoned and the Fathers and their effects were transferred to their new home.

Meanwhile the desire to extend the influence of the Gospel was uppermost with the Jesuits, and a couple of tentative expeditions were made to sound the dispositions of the neighboring tribes. Brébeuf and Chaumonot spent the winter of 1640-41 with the Neutral nation southward along Lake Erie, while

¹ Now known as the Wye River. This venerable spot is at Old Fort on the Grand Trunk Railway, three miles from Midland, Ont.

Garnier was taken from Fort Ste. Marie and sent, with Jogues and Pijart, in a westerly direction to the Petun, or Tobacco nation, who dwelt on the peninsula lying between Nottawasaga Bay and Lake Huron. But the ill-success of both attempts showed that the time was not yet ripe for extension. "Last year," wrote Jerome Lalemant in the *Relation* of 1641, "we undertook a mission to the Petuns, but we have deemed it more expedient to concentrate our energies and not

**His first visit
to the Petuns**

continue our labors among those more distant peoples until the nearer tribes have been won over, more especially when we take into account the small number of our men." The only fruits reaped during Father Garnier's visit to the Petuns were the baptisms of a few children and adults in danger of death. The mass of the population resisted the grace so freely offered to them; they accused the missionary of sorcery and cruelly drove him away. But God did not allow his faithful servant to go unavenged. "The town of Ehwae, the principal town of the mission," continued Jerome Lalemant, "whence Father Garnier had been driven last year, underwent every conceivable misfortune before the close of the twelvemonth. Most of the lodges were burned by the enemy three months later; many inhabitants died of hunger, cold and smallpox; others perished in the waves, and numbers were taken by the enemy. In fact, the matter appeared so extraordinary that the captain of a neighboring village could not help noticing it, and attributed the desolation of the village to no other cause than the refusal it made to hear the preachers of the Gospel last year."

Ill-success, however, could not daunt the courage of the young missionary. He had now several years' experience in Huronia, and he was ready to fill any position in the field, chiefly on account of his complete

**Appreciated by
Brébeuf**

mastery of the Huron tongue which gave him a remarkable ascendancy over the tribes. Father de Brébeuf, himself an excellent judge in this matter, writing to the General in 1637, asserted that the missionaries in Huronia were in every way extraordinary workers, who combined, in an unusual manner, eloquence and union with God with a burning zeal for souls. "So persistent and studious are they all," he wrote, "that in only one or two years they have gained a truly wonderful proficiency in a language still rude and not reduced to grammatical rules. However, in this regard," he added, "Father Garnier ranks first." "He mastered the language of the savages so thoroughly," wrote Ragueneau, in his turn, twelve years later, "that they themselves were astonished at him." An indefatigable laborer and replete with every gift of nature and grace, he became an accomplished missionary.

A more fruitful field than any yet offered him, where he would find ample scope for his zeal, was now allotted to him. This was Teanaostaye,¹ the largest village of the Cord clan, where a mission had been established in 1638. Here for six years he spent himself with all the devotedness and self-

¹ Known also as St. Joseph II, situated on the Flanagan farm, west half of lot 7, concession IV, Medonte township. (Cf. Jones' *Old Huronia*, p. 19.)

sacrifice of which he was capable. From 1640 to 1646 he labored in season and out of season, instructing the dusky Hurons in the truths of religion, rooting out their superstitions, teaching them to recognize the one true God, urging them to pray to Him, conferring baptism on them, following them on the chase, strengthening their souls with the Sacraments, and burying them when they were dead. So thorough was his knowledge of the savage character, so deeply did he penetrate their hearts, and so powerful was the eloquence of his example that he drew the Hurons to him. His face, his eyes, his gestures, even his smiles, proclaimed his holiness; his very presence raised Huron hearts to God. The *Relation* of 1650

**His personal
influence**

tells us that several were converted to the faith at the mere aspect of his angelic face, and all who came in contact with him took away with them the liveliest impression of his virtue. "The love of God," wrote Ragueneau, "which reigned in his heart animated all his movements and made them holy." This interior perfection of soul was, after the manner of the saints, sustained by a rigid penitential life. Father Garnier's self-imposed bodily mortifications were many and severe. His bed, a combination of saplings and bark, was hard and uninviting; every time he returned from his mission journeys he sharpened the iron points of the belt which he wore next to his naked flesh; his only food was that of the savages themselves, that is to say, "the least the most miserable tramp could hope for in France." And thus this holy man preached

the Kingdom of God both by word and example to his people at Teanaostaye for six years.

During the alarms caused by the visits of the cruel Iroquois, and especially during the pestilence which raged several times in Huronia, when the missionaries were treated as sorcerers and when all doors were closed against them, Father Garnier went fearlessly

His labor and untiring zeal

from village to village and cabin to cabin, wherever he knew there was a soul to save; his zeal and charity always found the means to break through the obstacles placed in his way. He had little to do with mere human prudence, and had recourse to the Angels whose powerful help he always invoked. Savages whom he went to assist at the hour of death asserted that they had seen him accompanied by a young man of rare beauty and majestic brilliancy.

In October, 1646, Father Garnier handed over to Father Daniel the flourishing mission of St. Joseph, at Teanaostaye, and betook himself with Father Garreau to the Petun nation whence he had been driven out six years before as a sorcerer. It was the Petuns themselves who now asked for missionaries to instruct them in the Christian religion and to establish centers among them. Two large villages, Etharita in the Wolf clan, and Ekarenniondi in the Deer clan, were chosen as the most favorable sites for missionary activity, and the missions of St. John and St. Mathias were founded.¹ In this fresh field Garnier found an outlet

¹ A third mission, St. Matthew, was founded among the Petuns, in Feb 1649, and placed in charge of Father Noël Chabanel, who was to shed his blood a few months later.

for his devouring zeal. In a letter to the General of the Jesuits, April 25th, 1647, he wrote, "Good Father Garreau and I are nearly always separated, for he makes a stay of ten or twelve days in one village and I in the other. Then he will come to join me and I him, and after spending two or three days together he will go to the village where I had been previously and I to the village where he had been. Thus we live without companionship save that of the Good Angels and that of the souls we are instructing."

Isolation among savages was one of the hardships which had to be borne patiently, and Garnier evidently carried this cross joyously. But other crosses were appearing on the horizon. The Iroquois had already proved that they were bent on the effacement of the Huron nation and would show no mercy to those who fell into their hands. The destruction of his old mission of Teanaostaye in July, 1648, and the violent death of Father Daniel, his successor there, gave Garnier food for serious reflection, but it did not dampen the ardor of his zeal among the Petuns at Etharita. Encouraged by his own success and that of Garreau, his companion at St. Mathias, he entertained the hope that the Iroquois would limit their destructive activities to the Hurons proper and would leave the Petuns undisturbed. In this, however, Father Garnier was to meet with a cruel disappointment.

After the invasion by the enemy in the spring of 1649, the mission centers among the Hurons were destroyed; only Fort Ste. Marie still stood intact.

During the rest of that year bands of Iroquois savages remained prowling about the country, seizing and slaying all who fell in their way.

**The Iroquois
invasion**

The Petun village nearest to their haunts, and necessarily the most exposed, was Etharita, Father Garnier's own mission, containing five or six hundred families. Spies had been sent out to watch the movements of the enemy, and anticipating an attack, a body of Petun warriors went out on December 5th, 1649, to meet them, leaving the village quite unprotected. But the astute Iroquois, always on the alert, avoided their advance, took a roundabout way, and seizing two straggling Petuns, learned from them of the absence of the warriors from Etharita and the desperate straits of the women and children left behind. Losing no time the dreaded enemy appeared before the gates of Etharita at three o'clock in the afternoon of December 7th, 1649, and attacked the defenceless inhabitants. Some sought safety in flight; others were slain on the spot; others were taken prisoners; but the Iroquois fearing the return of the absent warriors, hastened to complete their sanguinary work, and then retreated precipitately, putting to death all who could not keep up with them in their flight.

Father Garnier was one of the victims of this hideous massacre. When the enemy appeared he was instructing the people in their cabins. At the first alarm he went straight to the chapel where he found some Christians.¹ "We are dead men now, brothers,"

¹ The account of Father Garnier's death is found in the *Relation* of 1650. Clev. edit., vol. xxxv, p. 111 et seq.

he said to them; "pray to God and escape by whatever way you can; but keep your faith as long as life remains, and may death find you thinking of God!" He gave them his blessing and then left hurriedly to help other souls. The whole village was in despair;

He falls mortally wounded defense was useless. Several about to flee implored Father Garnier to go with them, but he refused; and unmindful of self he thought only of the salvation of the unfortunate victims around him. Urged on by his zeal he hastened hither and thither, giving absolution to the Christians whom he met. In the burning cabins he sought the children, the sick, or the catechumens, and over them, even in the midst of the flames, he poured the waters of baptism, his own heart burning with no other fire than that kindled by the love of God.

It was while engaged in this holy work that he met his death. A musket ball struck him, penetrating his body a little below the breast; another, from the same volley, tearing open his stomach and lodging

His heroism even in death in the thigh, brought him to the ground. His courage, however, was unabated. The Iroquois savage who

had fired at him stripped him of his cassock, and leaving him weltering in his blood, went in pursuit of the other fugitives. Father Garnier, a short time after, was seen to clasp his hands in prayer; then, looking about him, he perceived, some feet away, a poor man who, like himself, had received his death wound, but who still gave signs of life. Murmuring a few words of prayer, the dying missionary, in whom

zeal for souls was stronger than death, struggled to his knees, and, rising with difficulty, dragged himself as best he could toward the sufferer, in order to assist him. He had made but three or four steps when he fell again, somewhat heavily. Raising himself a second time, he got once more upon his knees and strove to approach the wounded Petun, but his body, drained of its blood which was flowing in abundance from his wounds, was not equal to his heroism. After advancing five or six steps he fell a third time. "Further than this," the *Relation* adds, "we have not been able to ascertain what he accomplished. The good Christian woman who faithfully related all this to us, saw no more of him, being herself overtaken by an Iroquois, who struck her on the head with a war-hatchet, felling her upon the spot, though she afterward escaped. The Father, shortly after, received from a hatchet two blows upon the temples, one on either side, which penetrated to the brain. To him it was the recompense for all past services, the richest he had hoped for from God's goodness. His body was stripped, and left entirely naked where it lay."

A remnant of fugitive Christians, all covered with blood, arrived hurriedly at Ekarenniondi, twelve miles away, and gave the news of the massacre. Fearing that a similar misfortune was in store for them, the night of December 7th was one of continual alarm for the people of St. Mathias. However, early on the 8th, it was ascertained that the enemy had retired, and Fathers Garreau and Greslon set out at once for Etharita. A sad spectacle awaited them. They saw only dead bodies heaped together, some almost con-

sumed by fire, others deluged with their own blood. The few who still showed signs of life were all covered with wounds, but looking for death and blessing God in their wretchedness. After investigation they found the body of Father Garnier completely covered with blood and ashes. They buried him in the spot where the church had stood, although there remained no longer any trace of the building, the fire having consumed all.

**Finding of his
mangled body**

"It was truly a rich treasure," we read in the *Relation of 1650*, "to deposit in so desolate a spot the body of so noble a servant of God; but that great God will surely find a way to reunite us all in Heaven since it is for His sake alone that we are thus scattered both during life and after death."

Two days later the Petun warriors who had gone to intercept the Iroquois, returned to Etharita, only to find their village in ashes and the dead and mangled bodies of their wives and children. For half a day they maintained a profound silence, seated after the manner of savages on the ground, without lifting their eyes or uttering even a sigh, like marble statues without speech, without sight and without movement. The loss of the pastor and his flock was another heavy blow to the Huron mission, but "the missionaries adored the Divine hand and disposed themselves to accept all that He willed even to the end."

Thus ended the mission of St. John, at Etharita, and the heroic Father Charles Garnier. No trace has yet been discovered of this once flourishing Petun village. While the site of St. Mathias has undoubtedly been located, owing to its proximity to Ekaren-

niondi, or Standing Rock, a monumental landmark, forty feet high, still to be found in Simcoe county, Etharita, where Father Garnier was interred under the ruins of his chapel, has not yet been discovered.¹ Data given in the *Relations* place it four leagues in a southwesterly direction from Standing Rock. Possibly the presence of ash beds or refuge heaps, the only sure sign of ancient village sites, may be traced some day in that neighborhood to renew public interest in Father Garnier's life and labors.²

It must be said, however, that the memory of this Jesuit is one of the most highly cherished in Canadian missionary annals. His youth, his patrician birth, his abandonment of worldly prospects, his untiring zeal, his tragic end, have all provided topics for writers of fiction. A couple of these writers have in recent years woven details entirely unauthentic into his early life and thrown a glamor of romance about his name and his career. Suffice it to say, the imaginations of novelists will find very little promising material to work on in Garnier's life. Father Paul Ragueneau, who was his spiritual adviser for twelve years and who knew all the secrets of his heart, pays an admirable tribute in the *Relation* of 1650 to the holiness of Garnier. "His great aspirations after sanctity," he wrote, "had grown with him from his infancy. I can truly say that in those twelve years I do not think that,

1 A relic of Father Garnier, evidently authentic, is preserved in the Jesuit college, Canterbury, England.

2 Cf. Jones' *Old Huronia*, pp. 260-261.

save in sleep, he spent a single hour without these burning and vehement desires of progressing more and more in the ways of God and of helping forward in them his fellow-men. Outside of these considerations, nothing in the world affected him, neither relatives, nor friends, nor rest, nor consolation, nor hardships, nor fatigues. God was his all; and apart from this, all else was to him as nothing."

The Council of Bishops convened in Quebec, in 1886, linked Father Garnier's name with those of the other Canadian missionary victims of the Iroquois, in the petition presented to the Holy See for the introduction of the cause of Beatification of Father John de Brébeuf and his companions. May the day be not far distant when we can exclaim: "Blessed Charles Garnier, pray for us!"

