

FRANCIS PARKMAN

FRANCE AND ENGLAND
IN N AMERICA, PART VII,
VOL 1: A HALF-CENTURY
OF CONFLICT

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PREFACE

This book, forming Part VI. of the series called France and England in North America, fills the gap between Part V., "Count Frontenac," and Part VII., "Montcalm and Wolfe;" so that the series now forms a continuous history of the efforts of France to occupy and control this continent.

In the present volumes the nature of the subject does not permit an unbroken thread of narrative, and the unity of the book lies in its being throughout, in one form or another, an illustration of the singularly contrasted characters and methods of the rival claimants to North America.

Like the rest of the series, this work is founded on original documents. The statements of secondary writers have been accepted only when found to conform to the evidence of contemporaries, whose writings have been sifted and collated with the greatest care. As extremists on each side have charged

me with favoring the other, I hope I have been unfair to neither.

The manuscript material collected for the preparation of the series now complete forms about seventy volumes, most of them folios. These have been given by me from time to time to the Massachusetts Historical Society, in whose library they now are, open to the examination of those interested in the subjects of which they treat. The collection was begun forty-five years ago, and its formation has been exceedingly slow, having been retarded by difficulties which seemed insurmountable, and for years were so in fact. Hence the completion of the series has required twice the time that would have sufficed under less unfavorable conditions.

Boston, March 26, 1892.

CHAPTER I

1700-1713

EVE OF WAR

The Spanish Succession.—Influence of Louis XIV. on History.—French Schemes of Conquest in America.—New York.—Unfitness of the Colonies for War.—The Five Nations.—Doubt and Vacillation.—The Western Indians.—Trade and Politics.

The war which in the British colonies was called Queen Anne's War, and in England the War of the Spanish Succession, was the second of a series of four conflicts which ended in giving to Great Britain a maritime and colonial preponderance over France and Spain. So far as concerns the colonies and the sea, these several wars may be regarded as a single protracted one, broken by intervals of truce. The three earlier of them, it is true, were European contests, begun and waged on European disputes. Their American part was incidental and apparently subordinate, yet it involved questions of prime importance in the history of the world.

The War of the Spanish Succession sprang from the ambition of Louis XIV. We are apt to regard the story of that gorgeous monarch as a tale that is told; but his influence shapes the life of nations to this day. At the beginning of his reign two roads lay before him, and it was a momentous question for posterity, as for his own age, which one of them he would choose,—whether he would follow the wholesome policy of his great minister Colbert, or obey his own vanity and arrogance, and plunge France into exhausting wars; whether he would hold to the principle of tolerance embodied in the Edict of Nantes, or do the work of fanaticism and priestly ambition. The one course meant prosperity, progress, and the rise of a middle class; the other meant bankruptcy and the Dragonades,—and this was the King's choice. Crushing taxation, misery, and ruin followed, till France burst out at last in a frenzy, drunk with the wild dreams of Rousseau. Then came the Terror and the Napoleonic wars, and reaction on reaction, revolution on revolution, down to our own day.

Louis placed his grandson on the throne of Spain, and insulted England by acknowledging as her rightful King the son of James II., whom she had deposed. Then England declared war. Canada and the northern British colonies had had but a short breathing time since the Peace of Ryswick; both were tired of slaughtering each other, and both needed rest. Yet before the declaration of war, the Canadian officers of the Crown prepared, with their usual energy, to meet the expected crisis. One of them wrote:

"If war be declared, it is certain that the King can very easily conquer and ruin New England." The French of Canada often use the name "New England" as applying to the British colonies in general. They are twice as populous as Canada, he goes on to say; but the people are great cowards, totally undisciplined, and ignorant of war, while the Canadians are brave, hardy, and well trained. We have, besides, twenty-eight companies of regulars, and could raise six thousand warriors from our Indian allies. Four thousand men could easily lay waste all the northern English colonies, to which end we must have five ships of war, with one thousand troops on board, who must land at Penobscot, where they must be joined by two thousand regulars, militia, and Indians, sent from Canada by way of the Chaudière and the Kennebec. Then the whole force must go to Portsmouth, take it by assault, leave a garrison there, and march to Boston, laying waste all the towns and villages by the way; after destroying Boston, the army must march for New York, while the fleet follows along the coast. "Nothing could be easier," says the writer, "for the road is good, and there is plenty of horses and carriages. The troops would ruin everything as they advanced, and New York would quickly be destroyed and burned."¹

Another plan, scarcely less absurd, was proposed about the same time by the celebrated Le Moyne d'Iberville. The essential point, he says, is to get possession of Boston; but there are

¹ *Premier Projet pour L'Expédition contre la Nouvelle Angleterre, 1701. Second Projet, etc. Compare N. Y. Col. Docs., ix. 725.*

difficulties and risks in the way. Nothing, he adds, referring to the other plan, seems difficult to persons without experience; but unless we are prepared to raise a great and costly armament, our only hope is in surprise. We should make it in winter, when the seafaring population, which is the chief strength of the place, is absent on long voyages. A thousand Canadians, four hundred regulars, and as many Indians should leave Quebec in November, ascend the Chaudière, then descend the Kennebec, approach Boston under cover of the forest, and carry it by a night attack. Apparently he did not know that but for its lean neck—then but a few yards wide—Boston was an island, and that all around for many leagues the forest that was to have covered his approach had already been devoured by numerous busy settlements. He offers to lead the expedition, and declares that if he is honored with the command, he will warrant that the New England capital will be forced to submit to King Louis, after which New York can be seized in its turn.²

In contrast to those incisive proposals, another French officer breathed nothing but peace. Brouillan, governor of Acadia, wrote to the governor of Massachusetts to suggest that, with the consent of their masters, they should make a treaty of neutrality. The English governor being dead, the letter came before the council, who received it coldly. Canada, and not Acadia, was the enemy

² *Mémoire du Sieur d'Iberville sur Boston et ses Dépendances*, 1700 (1701?). Baron de Saint-Castin also drew up a plan for attacking Boston in 1702 with lists of necessary munitions and other supplies.

they had to fear. Moreover, Boston merchants made good profit by supplying the Acadians with necessities which they could get in no other way; and in time of war these profits, though lawless, were greater than in time of peace. But what chiefly influenced the council against the overtures of Brouillan was a passage in his letter reminding them that, by the Treaty of Ryswick, the New England people had no right to fish within sight of the Acadian coast. This they flatly denied, saying that the New England people had fished there time out of mind, and that if Brouillan should molest them, they would treat it as an act of war.³

While the New England colonies, and especially Massachusetts and New Hampshire, had most cause to deprecate a war, the prospect of one was also extremely unwelcome to the people of New York. The conflict lately closed had borne hard upon them through the attacks of the enemy, and still more through the derangement of their industries. They were distracted, too, with the factions rising out of the recent revolution under Jacob Leisler. New York had been the bulwark of the colonies farther south, who, feeling themselves safe, had given their protector little help, and that little grudgingly, seeming to regard the war as no concern of theirs. Three

³ *Brouillan à Bellomont, 10 Août, 1701. Conseil de Baston à Brouillan, 22 Août, 1701.* Brouillan acted under royal orders, having been told, in case of war being declared, to propose a treaty with New England, unless he should find that he can "se garantir des insultes des Anglais" and do considerable harm to their trade, in which case he is to make no treaty. *Mémoire du Roy au Sieur de Brouillan, 23 Mars, 1700.*

thousand and fifty-one pounds, provincial currency, was the joint contribution of Virginia, Maryland, East Jersey, and Connecticut to the aid of New York during five years of the late war.⁴ Massachusetts could give nothing, even if she would, her hands being full with the defence of her own borders. Colonel Quarry wrote to the Board of Trade that New York could not bear alone the cost of defending herself; that the other colonies were "stuffed with commonwealth notions," and were "of a sour temper in opposition to government," so that Parliament ought to take them in hand and compel each to do its part in the common cause.⁵ To this Lord Cornbury adds that Rhode Island and Connecticut are even more stubborn than the rest, hate all true subjects of the Queen, and will not give a farthing to the war so long as they can help it.⁶ Each province lived in selfish isolation, recking little of its neighbor's woes.

New York, left to fight her own battles, was in a wretched condition for defence. It is true that, unlike the other colonies, the King had sent her a few soldiers, counting at this time about one hundred and eighty, all told;⁷ but they had been left so long without pay that they were in a state of scandalous destitution. They would have been left without rations had not three private gentlemen—Schuyler, Livingston, and Cortlandt—

⁴ Schuyler, *Colonial New York*, i. 431, 432.

⁵ *Colonel Quarry to the Lords of Trade, 16 June, 1703.*

⁶ *Cornbury to the Lords of Trade, 9 September, 1703.*

⁷ *Bellomont to the Lords of Trade, 28 February, 1700.*

advanced money for their supplies, which seems never to have been repaid.⁸ They are reported to have been "without shirts, breeches, shoes, or stockings," and "in such a shameful condition that the women when passing them are obliged to cover their eyes." "The Indians ask," says the governor, "'Do you think us such fools as to believe that a king who cannot clothe his soldiers can protect us from the French, with their fourteen hundred men all well equipped?'"⁹

The forts were no better than their garrisons. The governor complains that those of Albany and Schenectady "are so weak and ridiculous that they look more like pounds for cattle than forts." At Albany the rotten stockades were falling from their own weight.

If New York had cause to complain of those whom she sheltered, she herself gave cause of complaint to those who sheltered her. The Five Nations of the Iroquois had always been her allies against the French, had guarded her borders and fought her battles. What they wanted in return were gifts, attentions, just dealings, and active aid in war; but they got them in scant measure. Their treatment by the province was short-sighted, if not ungrateful. New York was a mixture of races and religions not yet fused into a harmonious body politic, divided in interests and torn with intestine disputes. Its Assembly was made up in large part of men unfitted to pursue a consistent scheme of

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Schuyler, *Colonial New York*, i. 488.

policy, or spend the little money at their disposal on any objects but those of present and visible interest. The royal governors, even when personally competent, were hampered by want of means and by factious opposition. The Five Nations were robbed by land-speculators, cheated by traders, and feebly supported in their constant wars with the French. Spasmodically, as it were, on occasions of crisis, they were summoned to Albany, soothed with such presents as could be got from unwilling legislators, or now and then from the Crown, and exhorted to fight vigorously in the common cause. The case would have been far worse but for a few patriotic men, with Peter Schuyler at their head, who understood the character of these Indians, and labored strenuously to keep them in what was called their allegiance.

The proud and fierce confederates had suffered greatly in the late war. Their numbers had been reduced about one half, and they now counted little more than twelve hundred warriors. They had learned a bitter and humiliating lesson, and their arrogance had changed to distrust and alarm. Though hating the French, they had learned to respect their military activity and prowess, and to look askance on the Dutch and English, who rarely struck a blow in their defence, and suffered their hereditary enemy to waste their fields and burn their towns. The English called the Five Nations British subjects, on which the French taunted them with being British slaves, and told them that the King of England had ordered the governor of New York to poison them. This invention had great effect. The Iroquois capital, Onondaga,

was filled with wild rumors. The credulous savages were tossed among doubts, suspicions, and fears. Some were in terror of poison, and some of witchcraft. They believed that the rival European nations had leagued to destroy them and divide their lands, and that they were bewitched by sorcerers, both French and English.¹⁰

After the Peace of Ryswick, and even before it, the French governor kept agents among them. Some of these were soldiers, like Joncaire, Maricourt, or Longueuil, and some were Jesuits, like Bruyas, Lamberville, or Vaillant. The Jesuits showed their usual ability and skill in their difficult and perilous task. The Indians derived various advantages from their presence, which they regarded also as a flattering attention; while the English, jealous of their influence, made feeble attempts to counteract it by sending Protestant clergymen to Onondaga. "But," writes Lord Bellomont, "it is next to impossible to prevail with the ministers to live among the Indians. They [the Indians] are so nasty as never to wash their hands, or the utensils they dress their victuals with."¹¹ Even had their zeal been proof to these afflictions, the ministers would have been no match for their astute opponents. In vain Bellomont assured the Indians that the Jesuits were "the greatest lyars and impostors in the world."¹² In vain he offered a hundred dollars for every one of them whom

¹⁰ *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, iv. 658.

¹¹ *Bellomont to the Lords of Trade*, 17 October, 1700.

¹² *Conference of Bellomont with the Indians*, 26 August, 1700.

they should deliver into his hands. They would promise to expel them; but their minds were divided, and they stood in fear of one another. While one party distrusted and disliked the priests, another was begging the governor of Canada to send more. Others took a practical view of the question. "If the English sell goods cheaper than the French, we will have ministers; if the French sell them cheaper than the English, we will have priests." Others, again, wanted neither Jesuits nor ministers, "because both of you [English and French] have made us drunk with the noise of your praying."¹³

The aims of the propagandists on both sides were secular. The French wished to keep the Five Nations neutral in the event of another war; the English wished to spur them to active hostility; but while the former pursued their purpose with energy and skill, the efforts of the latter were intermittent and generally feeble.

"The Nations," writes Schuyler, "are full of factions." There was a French party and an English party in every town, especially in Onondaga, the centre of intrigue. French influence was strongest at the western end of the confederacy, among the Senecas, where the French officer Joncaire, an Iroquois by adoption, had won many to France; and it was weakest at the eastern end, among the Mohawks, who were nearest to the English settlements. Here the Jesuits had labored long and strenuously in the work of conversion, and from time to time

¹³ *Journal of Bleeker and Schuyler on their visit to Onondaga, August, September, 1701.*

they had led their numerous proselytes to remove to Canada, where they settled at St. Louis, or Caughnawaga, on the right bank of the St. Lawrence, a little above Montreal, where their descendants still remain. It is said that at the beginning of the eighteenth century two-thirds of the Mohawks had thus been persuaded to cast their lot with the French, and from enemies to become friends and allies. Some of the Oneidas and a few of the other Iroquois nations joined them and strengthened the new mission settlement; and the Caughnawagas afterwards played an important part between the rival European colonies.

The "Far Indians," or "Upper Nations," as the French called them, consisted of the tribes of the Great Lakes and adjacent regions, Ottawas, Pottawattamies, Sacs, Foxes, Sioux, and many more. It was from these that Canada drew the furs by which she lived. Most of them were nominal friends and allies of the French, who in the interest of trade strove to keep these wild-cats from tearing one another's throats, and who were in constant alarm lest they should again come to blows with their old enemies, the Five Nations, in which case they would call on Canada for help, thus imperilling those pacific relations with the Iroquois confederacy which the French were laboring constantly to secure.

In regard to the "Far Indians," the French, the English, and the Five Iroquois Nations all had distinct and opposing interests. The French wished to engross their furs, either by inducing the Indians to bring them down to Montreal, or by sending traders

into their country to buy them. The English, with a similar object, wished to divert the "Far Indians" from Montreal and draw them to Albany; but this did not suit the purpose of the Five Nations, who, being sharp politicians and keen traders, as well as bold and enterprising warriors, wished to act as middle-men between the beaver-hunting tribes and the Albany merchants, well knowing that good profit might thus accrue. In this state of affairs the converted Iroquois settled at Caughnawaga played a peculiar part. In the province of New York, goods for the Indian trade were of excellent quality and comparatively abundant and cheap; while among the French, especially in time of war, they were often scarce and dear. The Caughnawagas accordingly, whom neither the English nor the French dared offend, used their position to carry on a contraband trade between New York and Canada. By way of Lake Champlain and the Hudson they brought to Albany furs from the country of the "Far Indians," and exchanged them for guns, blankets, cloths, knives, beads, and the like. These they carried to Canada and sold to the French traders, who in this way, and often in this alone, supplied themselves with the goods necessary for bartering furs from the "Far Indians." This lawless trade of the Caughnawagas went on even in time of war; and opposed as it was to every principle of Canadian policy, it was generally connived at by the French authorities as the only means of obtaining the goods necessary for keeping their Indian allies in good humor.

It was injurious to English interests; but the fur-traders of

Albany and also the commissioners charged with Indian affairs, being Dutchmen converted by force into British subjects, were, with a few eminent exceptions, cool in their devotion to the British Crown; while the merchants of the port of New York, from whom the fur-traders drew their supplies, thought more of their own profits than of the public good. The trade with Canada through the Caughnawagas not only gave aid and comfort to the enemy, but continually admitted spies into the colony, from whom the governor of Canada gained information touching English movements and designs.

The Dutch traders of Albany and the importing merchants who supplied them with Indian goods had a strong interest in preventing active hostilities with Canada, which would have spoiled their trade. So, too, and for similar reasons, had influential persons in Canada. The French authorities, moreover, thought it impolitic to harass the frontiers of New York by war parties, since the Five Nations might come to the aid of their Dutch and English allies, and so break the peaceful relations which the French were anxious to maintain with them. Thus it happened that, during the first six or seven years of the eighteenth century, there was a virtual truce between Canada and New York, and the whole burden of the war fell upon New England, or rather upon Massachusetts, with its outlying district of Maine and its small and weak neighbor, New Hampshire.¹⁴

¹⁴ The foregoing chapter rests on numerous documents in the Public Record Office, Archives de la Marine, Archives Nationales, *N. Y. Colonial Documents*, vols. iv. v. ix.,

CHAPTER II

1694-1704

DETROIT

Michilimackinac.—La Mothe-Cadillac: his Disputes with the Jesuits.—Opposing Views.—Plans of Cadillac: his Memorial to the Court; his Opponents.—Detroit founded. The New Company.—Detroit changes Hands.—Strange Act of the Five Nations.

In the few years of doubtful peace that preceded Queen Anne's War, an enterprise was begun, which, nowise in accord with the wishes and expectations of those engaged in it, was destined to produce as its last result an American city.

Antoine de La Mothe-Cadillac commanded at Michilimackinac, whither Frontenac had sent him in 1694. This old mission of the Jesuits, where they had gathered the remnants of the lake tribes dispersed by the Iroquois at the middle of the seventeenth century, now savored little of its apostolic beginnings. It was the centre of the western fur-trade and the favorite haunt of the *coureurs de bois*. Brandy and squaws

abounded, and according to the Jesuit Carheil, the spot where Marquette had labored was now a witness of scenes the most unedifying.¹⁵

At Michilimackinac was seen a curious survival of Huron-Iroquois customs. The villages of the Hurons and Ottawas, which were side by side, separated only by a fence, were surrounded by a common enclosure of triple palisades, which, with the addition of loopholes for musketry, were precisely like those seen by Cartier at Hochelaga, and by Champlain in the Onondaga country. The dwellings which these defences enclosed were also after the old Huron-Iroquois pattern,—those long arched structures covered with bark which Brébeuf found by the shores of Matchedash Bay, and Jogues on the banks of the Mohawk. Besides the Indians, there was a French colony at the place, chiefly of fur-traders, lodged in log-cabins, roofed with cedar bark, and forming a street along the shore close to the palisaded villages of the Hurons and Ottawas. The fort, known as Fort Buade, stood at the head of the little bay.¹⁶

The Hurons and Ottawas were thorough savages, though the Hurons retained the forms of Roman Catholic Christianity. This tribe, writes Cadillac, "are reduced to a very small number; and it is well for us that they are, for they are ill-disposed and mischievous, with a turn for intrigue and a capacity for large undertakings. Luckily, their power is not great; but as they cannot

¹⁵ See "Old Régime in Canada," 383.

¹⁶ *Relation de La Mothe-Cadillac*, in Margry, v. 75.

play the lion, they play the fox, and do their best to make trouble between us and our allies."

La Mothe-Cadillac¹⁷ was a captain in the colony troops, and an admirer of the late governor, Frontenac, to whose policy he adhered, and whose prejudices he shared. He was amply gifted with the kind of intelligence that consists in quick observation, sharpened by an inveterate spirit of sarcasm, was energetic, enterprising, well instructed, and a bold and sometimes a visionary schemer, with a restless spirit, a nimble and biting wit, a Gascon impetuosity of temperament, and as much devotion as an officer of the King was forced to profess, coupled with small love of priests and an aversion to Jesuits.¹⁸ Carheil and Marest, missionaries of that order at Michilimackinac, were objects of his especial antipathy, which they fully returned. The two priests were impatient of a military commandant to whose authority they were in some small measure subjected; and they

¹⁷ He wrote his name as above. It is often written La Motte, which has the advantage of conveying the pronunciation unequivocally to an unaccustomed English ear. La Mothe-Cadillac came of a good family of Languedoc. His father, Jean de La Mothe, seigneur de Cadillac et de Launay, or Laumet, was a counsellor in the Parliament of Toulouse. The date of young Cadillac's birth is uncertain. The register of his marriage places it in 1661, and that of his death in 1657. Another record, cited by Farmer in his *History of Detroit*, makes it 1658. In 1703 he himself declared that he was forty-seven years old. After serving as lieutenant in the regiment of Clairembault, he went to Canada about the year 1683. He became skilled in managing Indians, made himself well acquainted with the coasts of New England, and strongly urged an attack by sea on New York and Boston, as the only sure means of securing French ascendancy. He was always in opposition to the clerical party.

¹⁸ See *La Mothe-Cadillac à -, 3 Août, 1695*.

imputed to him the disorders which he did not, and perhaps could not, prevent. They were opposed also to the traffic in brandy, which was favored by Cadillac on the usual ground that it attracted the Indians, and so prevented the English from getting control of the fur-trade,—an argument which he reinforced by sanitary considerations based on the supposed unwholesomeness of the fish and smoked meat which formed the chief diet of Michilimackinac. "A little brandy after the meal," he says, with the solemnity of the learned Purgon, "seems necessary to cook the bilious meats and the crudities they leave in the stomach."¹⁹

Cadillac calls Carheil, superior of the mission, the most passionate and domineering man he ever knew, and further declares that the Jesuit tried to provoke him to acts of violence, in order to make matter of accusation against him. If this was Carheil's aim, he was near succeeding. Once, in a dispute with the commandant on the brandy-trade, he upbraided him sharply for permitting it; to which Cadillac replied that he only obeyed the orders of the court. The Jesuit rejoined that he ought to obey God, and not man,—"on which," says the commandant, "I told him that his talk smelt of sedition a hundred yards off, and begged that he would amend it. He told me that I gave myself airs that did not belong to me, holding his fist before my nose at the same time. I confess I almost forgot that he was a priest, and felt for a moment like knocking his jaw out of joint; but, thank God, I contented myself with taking him by the arm, pushing him out,

¹⁹ *La Mothe-Cadillac* à –, 3 Août, 1695.

and ordering him not to come back."²⁰

Such being the relations of the commandant and the Father Superior, it is not surprising to find the one complaining that he cannot get absolved from his sins, and the other painting the morals and manners of Michilimackinac in the blackest colors.

I have spoken elsewhere of the two opposing policies that divided Canada,—the policies of concentration and of expansion, on the one hand leaving the west to the keeping of the Jesuits, and confining the population to the borders of the St. Lawrence; on the other, the occupation of the interior of the continent by posts of war and trade.²¹ Through the force of events the latter view had prevailed; yet while the military chiefs of Canada could not but favor it, the Jesuits were unwilling to accept it, and various interests in the colony still opposed it openly or secretly. Frontenac had been its strongest champion, and Cadillac followed in his steps. It seemed to him that the time had come for securing the west for France.

The strait—*détroit*—which connects Lake Huron with Lake Erie was the most important of all the western passes. It was

²⁰ "Il me dit que je me donnois des airs qui ne m'appartenoient pas, en me portant le poing au nez. Je vous avoue, Monsieur, que je pensai oublier qu'il étoit prêtre, et que je vis le moment où j'allois luy démonter la mâchoire; mais, Dieu merci, je me contentai de le prendre par le bras et de le pousser dehors, avec ordre de n'y plus rentrer." Margry, v. (author's edition), Introduction, civ. This introduction, with other editorial matter, is omitted in the edition of M. Margry's valuable collection, printed under a vote of the American Congress.

²¹ See "Count Frontenac," 440.

the key of the three upper lakes, with the vast countries watered by their tributaries, and it gave Canada her readiest access to the valley of the Mississippi. If the French held it, the English would be shut out from the northwest; if, as seemed likely, the English should seize it, the Canadian fur-trade would be ruined.²² The possession of it by the French would be a constant curb and menace to the Five Nations, as well as a barrier between those still formidable tribes and the western Indians, allies of Canada; and when the intended French establishment at the mouth of the Mississippi should be made, Detroit would be an indispensable link of communication between Canada and Louisiana.

Denonville had recognized the importance of the position, and it was by his orders that Greysolon Du Lhut, in 1686, had occupied it for a time, and built a picket fort near the site of Fort Gratiot.²³

It would be idle to imagine that the motives of Cadillac were wholly patriotic. Fur-trading interests were deeply involved in his plans, and bitter opposition was certain. The fur-trade, in its nature, was a constant breeder of discord. The people of Montreal would have the tribes come down every summer from the west and northwest and hold a fair under the palisades of their town. It is said that more than four hundred French families lived wholly or in part by this home trade, and therefore regarded with

²² Robert Livingston urged the occupation of Detroit as early as 1700. *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, iv. 650.

²³ *Denonville à Du Lhut, 6 Juin, 1686.* Count Frontenac, 133.

deep jealousy the establishment of interior posts, which would forestall it. Again, every new western post would draw away trade from those already established, and every trading license granted to a company or an individual would rouse the animosity of those who had been licensed before. The prosperity of Detroit would be the ruin of Michilimackinac, and those whose interests centred at the latter post angrily opposed the scheme of Cadillac.

He laid his plans before Count de Maurepas by a characteristic memorial, apparently written in 1699. In this he proposed to gather all the tribes of the lakes at Detroit, civilize them and teach them French, "insomuch that from pagans they would become children of the Church, and therefore good subjects of the King." They will form, he continues, a considerable settlement, "strong enough to bring the English and the Iroquois to reason, or, with help from Montreal, to destroy both of them." Detroit, he adds, should be the seat of trade, which should not be permitted in the countries beyond it. By this regulation the intolerable glut of beaver-skins, which spoils the market, may be prevented. This proposed restriction of the beaver-trade to Detroit was enough in itself to raise a tempest against the whole scheme. "Cadillac well knows that he has enemies," pursues the memorial, "but he keeps on his way without turning or stopping for the noise of the puppies who bark after him."²⁴

Among the essential features of his plan was a well-garrisoned

²⁴ "Sans se destourner et sans s'arrester au bruit des jappereaux qui crient après lui."—*Mémoire de La Mothe-Cadillac adressé au Comte de Maurepas.*

fort, and a church, served not by Jesuits alone, but also by Récollet friars and priests of the Missions Étrangères. The idea of this ecclesiastical partnership was odious to the Jesuits, who felt that the west was their proper field, and that only they had a right there. Another part of Cadillac's proposal pleased them no better. This was his plan of civilizing the Indians and teaching them to speak French; for it was the reproach of the Jesuit missions that they left the savage a savage still, and asked little of him but the practice of certain rites and the passive acceptance of dogmas to him incomprehensible.

"It is essential," says the memorial, "that in this matter of teaching the Indians our language the missionaries should act in good faith, and that his Majesty should have the goodness to impose his strictest orders upon them; for which there are several good reasons. The first and most stringent is that when members of religious orders or other ecclesiastics undertake anything, they never let it go. The second is that by not teaching French to the Indians they make themselves necessary [as interpreters] to the King and the governor. The third is that if all Indians spoke French, all kinds of ecclesiastics would be able to instruct them. This might cause them [the Jesuits] to lose some of the presents they get; for though these Reverend Fathers come here only for the glory of God, yet the one thing does not prevent the other,"—meaning that God and Mammon may be served at once. "Nobody can deny that the priests own three quarters of Canada. From St. Paul's Bay to Quebec, there is nothing but

the seignior of Beauport that belongs to a private person. All the rest, which is the best part, belongs to the Jesuits or other ecclesiastics. The Upper Town of Quebec is composed of six or seven superb palaces belonging to Hospital Nuns, Ursulines, Jesuits, Récollets, Seminary priests, and the bishop. There may be some forty private houses, and even these pay rent to the ecclesiastics, which shows that *the one thing does not prevent the other.*" From this it will be seen that, in the words of one of his enemies, Cadillac "was not quite in the odor of sanctity."

"One may as well knock one's head against a wall," concludes the memorial, "as hope to convert the Indians in any other way [than that of civilizing them]; for thus far all the fruits of the missions consist in the baptism of infants who die before reaching the age of reason."²⁵ This was not literally true, though the results of the Jesuit missions in the west had been meagre and transient to a surprising degree.

Cadillac's plan of a settlement at Detroit was not at first received with favor by Callières, the governor; while the intendant Champigny, a fast friend of the Jesuits, strongly opposed it. By their order the chief inhabitants of Quebec met at the Château St. Louis,—Callières, Champigny, and Cadillac himself being present. There was a heated debate on the beaver-trade, after which the intendant commanded silence, explained the projects of Cadillac, and proceeded to oppose them. His first point was that the natives should not be taught French, because

²⁵ *Mémoire adressé au Comte de Maurepas*, in Margry, v. 138.

the Indian girls brought up at the Ursuline Convent led looser lives than the young squaws who had received no instruction, while it was much the same with the boys brought up at the Seminary.

"M. de Champigny," returned the sarcastic Cadillac, "does great honor to the Ursulines and the Seminary. It is true that some Indian women who have learned our language have lived viciously; but that is because their teachers were too stiff with them, and tried to make them nuns."²⁶

Champigny's position, as stated by his adversary, was that "all intimacy of the Indians with the French is dangerous and corrupting to their morals," and that their only safety lies in keeping them at a distance from the settlements. This was the view of the Jesuits, and there is much to be said in its favor; but it remains not the less true that conversion must go hand in hand with civilization, or it is a failure and a fraud.

Cadillac was not satisfied with the results of the meeting at the Château St. Louis, and he wrote to the minister: "You can never hope that this business will succeed if it is discussed here on the spot. Canada is a country of cabals and intrigues, and it is impossible to reconcile so many different interests."²⁷ He sailed for France, apparently in the autumn of 1699, to urge his scheme at court. Here he had an interview with the colonial minister, Ponchartrain, to whom he represented the military and

²⁶ La Mothe-Cadillac, *Rapport au Ministre*, 1700, in Margry, v. 157.

²⁷ *Rapport au Ministre*, 1700.

political expediency of his proposed establishment;²⁸ and in a letter which seems to be addressed to La Touche, chief clerk in the Department of Marine and Colonies, he promised that the execution of his plan would insure the safety of Canada and the ruin of the British colonies.²⁹ He asked for fifty soldiers and fifty Canadians to begin the work, to be followed in the next year by twenty or thirty families and by two hundred picked men of various trades, sent out at the King's charge, along with priests of several communities, and nuns to attend the sick and teach the Indian girls. "I cannot tell you," continues Cadillac, "the efforts my enemies have made to deprive me of the honor of executing my project; but so soon as M. de Ponchartrain decides in its favor, the whole country will applaud it."

Ponchartrain accepted the plan, and Cadillac returned to Canada commissioned to execute it. Early in June, 1701, he left La Chine with a hundred men in twenty-five canoes loaded with provisions, goods, munitions, and tools. He was accompanied by Alphonse de Tonty, brother of Henri de Tonty, the companion of La Salle, and by two half-pay lieutenants, Dugué and Chacornacle, together with a Jesuit and a Récollet.³⁰ Following the difficult route of the Ottawa and Lake Huron, they

²⁸ Cadillac's report of this interview is given in Sheldon, *Early History of Michigan*, 85-91.

²⁹ *La Mothe-Cadillac à un premier commis, 18 Octobre, 1700*, in Margry, v. 166.

³⁰ *Callières au Ministre, 4 Octobre, 1701. Autre lettre du même, sans date*, in Margry, v. 187, 190.

reached their destination on the twenty-fourth of July, and built a picket fort sixty yards square, which by order of the governor they named Fort Ponchartrain.³¹ It stood near the west bank of the strait, about forty paces from the water.³² Thus was planted the germ of the city of Detroit.

Cadillac sent back Chacornacle with the report of what he had done, and a description of the country written in a strain of swelling and gushing rhetoric in singular contrast with his usual sarcastic utterances. "None but enemies of the truth," his letter concludes, "are enemies of this establishment, so necessary to the glory of the King, the progress of religion, and the destruction of the throne of Baal."³³

What he had, perhaps, still more at heart was making money out of it by the fur-trade. By command of the King a radical change had lately been made in this chief commerce of Canada, and the entire control of it had been placed in the hands of a company in which all Canadians might take shares. But as the risks were great and the conditions ill-defined, the number of subscribers was not much above one hundred and fifty; and the rest of the colony found themselves shut out from the trade,—to the ruin of some, and the injury of all.³⁴

³¹ *Callières et Champigny au Ministre, sans date.*

³² *Relation du Destroit* (by the Jesuit who accompanied the expedition).

³³ *Description de la Rivière du Détroit, jointe à la lettre de MM. de Callières et de Champigny, 8 Octobre, 1701.*

³⁴ *Callières au Ministre, 9 Novembre, 1700.*

All trade in furs was restricted to Detroit and Fort Frontenac, both of which were granted to the company, subject to be resumed by the King at his pleasure.³⁵ The company was to repay the eighty thousand francs which the expedition to Detroit had cost; and to this were added various other burdens. The King, however, was to maintain the garrison.

All the affairs of the company were placed in the hands of seven directors, who began immediately to complain that their burdens were too heavy, and to beg for more privileges; while an outcry against the privileges already granted rose from those who had not taken shares in the enterprise. Both in the company and out of it there was nothing but discontent. None were worse pleased than the two Jesuits Carheil and Marest, who saw their flocks at Michilimackinac, both Hurons and Ottawas, lured away to a new home at Detroit. Cadillac took a peculiar satisfaction in depriving Carheil of his converts, and in 1703 we find him writing to the minister Ponchartrain, that only twenty-five Hurons are left at Michilimackinac; and "I hope," he adds, "that in the autumn I shall pluck this last feather from his wing; and I am convinced that this obstinate priest will die in his parish without one parishioner to bury him."³⁶

³⁵ *Traité fait avec la Compagnie de la Colonie de Canada, 31 Octobre, 1701.*

³⁶ *Lamothe-Cadillac à Ponchartrain, 31 Aoust, 1703* (Margry, v. 301). On Cadillac's relations with the Jesuits, see *Conseils tenus par Lamothe-Cadillac avec les Sauvages* (Margry, v. 253-300); also a curious collection of Jesuit letters sent by Cadillac to the minister, with copious annotations of his own. He excepts from his strictures Father Engelran, who, he says, incurred the ill-will of the other Jesuits by favoring the

If the Indians came to Detroit, the French would not come. Cadillac had asked for five or six families as the modest beginning of a settlement; but not one had appeared. The Indians, too, were angry because the company asked too much for its goods; while the company complained that a forbidden trade, fatal to its interests, went on through all the region of the upper lakes. It was easy to ordain a monopoly, but impossible to enforce it. The prospects of the new establishment were deplorable; and Cadillac lost no time in presenting his views of the situation to the court. "Detroit is good, or it is bad," he writes to Ponchartrain. "If it is good, it ought to be sustained, without allowing the people of Canada to deliberate any more about it. If it is bad, the court ought to make up its mind concerning it as soon as may be. I have said what I think. I have explained the situation. You have felt the need of Detroit, and its utility for the glory of God, the progress of religion, and the good of the colony. Nothing is left me to do but to imitate the governor of the Holy City,—take water, and wash my hands of it." His aim now appears. He says that if Detroit were made a separate government, and he were put at the head of it, its prospects would improve. "You may well believe that the company cares for nothing but to make a profit out of it. It only wants to have a storehouse and clerks; no officers, no troops, no inhabitants. Take this business in hand, Monseigneur, and I promise that in two years your Detroit shall be established of itself." He then informs the minister that as

establishment of Detroit, and he also has a word of commendation for Father Germain.

the company complain of losing money, he has told them that if they will make over their rights to him, he will pay them back all their past outlays. "I promise you," he informs Ponchartrain, "that if they accept my proposal and you approve it, I will make our Detroit flourish. Judge if it is agreeable to me to have to answer for my actions to five or six merchants [the directors of the company], who not long ago were blacking their masters' boots." He is scarcely more reserved as to the Jesuits. "I do what I can to make them my friends, but, impiety apart, one had better sin against God than against them; for in that case one gets one's pardon, whereas in the other the offence is never forgiven in this world, and perhaps never would be in the other, if their credit were as great there as it is here."³⁷

The letters of Cadillac to the court are unique. No governor of New France, not even the audacious Frontenac, ever wrote to a minister of Louis XIV. with such off-hand freedom of language as this singular personage,—a mere captain in the colony troops; and to a more stable and balanced character it would have been impossible.

Cadillac's proposal was accepted. The company was required to abandon Detroit to him on his paying them the expenses they had incurred. Their monopoly was transferred to him; but as

³⁷ *La Mothe-Cadillac à Ponchartrain, 31 Août, 1703.* "Toute impiété à part, il vaudroit mieux pescher contre Dieu que contre eux, parce que d'un costé on en reçoit son pardon, et de l'autre, l'offense, mesme prétendue, n'est jamais remise dans ce monde, et ne le seroit peut-estre jamais dans l'autre, si leur crédit y estoit aussi grand qu'il est dans ce pays."

far as concerned beaver-skins, his trade was limited to twenty thousand francs a year. The governor was ordered to give him as many soldiers as he might want, permit as many persons to settle at Detroit as might choose to do so, and provide missionaries.³⁸ The minister exhorted him to quarrel no more with the Jesuits, or anybody else, to banish blasphemy and bad morals from the post, and not to offend the Five Nations.

The promised era of prosperity did not come. Detroit lingered on in a weak and troubled infancy, disturbed, as we shall see, by startling incidents. Its occupation by the French produced a noteworthy result. The Five Nations, filled with jealousy and alarm, appealed to the King of England for protection, and, the better to insure it, conveyed the whole country from Lake Ontario northward to Lake Superior, and westward as far as Chicago, "unto our souveraigne Lord King William the Third" and his heirs and successors forever. This territory is described in the deed as being about eight hundred miles long and four hundred wide, and was claimed by the Five Nations as theirs by right of conquest.³⁹ It of course included Detroit itself. The conveyance was drawn by the English authorities at Albany in a form to suit their purposes, and included terms of subjection and sovereignty which the signers could understand but imperfectly, if at all. The Five Nations gave away their land to no purpose.

³⁸ *Ponchartrain à La Mothe-Cadillac, 14 Juin, 1704.*

³⁹ *Deed from the Five Nations to the King of their Beaver Hunting Ground*, in *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, iv. 908. It is signed by the totems of sachems of all the Nations.

The French remained in undisturbed possession of Detroit. The English made no attempt to enforce their title, but they put the deed on file, and used it long after as the base of their claim to the region of the Lakes.

CHAPTER III

1703-1713

QUEEN ANNE'S WAR

The Forest of Maine.—A Treacherous Peace.—
A Frontier Village.—Wells and its People.—Attack
upon it.—Border Ravages.—Beaubassin's War-party.—
The "Woful Decade."—A Wedding Feast.—A Captive
Bridegroom.

For untold ages Maine had been one unbroken forest, and it was so still. Only along the rocky seaboard or on the lower waters of one or two great rivers a few rough settlements had gnawed slight indentations into this wilderness of woods; and a little farther inland some dismal clearing around a blockhouse or stockade let in the sunlight to a soil that had lain in shadow time out of mind. This waste of savage vegetation survives, in some part, to this day, with the same prodigality of vital force, the same struggle for existence and mutual havoc that mark all organized beings, from men to mushrooms. Young seedlings in millions spring every summer from the black mould, rich with

the decay of those that had preceded them, crowding, choking, and killing one another, perishing by their very abundance,—all but a scattered few, stronger than the rest, or more fortunate in position, which survive by blighting those about them. They in turn, as they grow, interlock their boughs, and repeat in a season or two the same process of mutual suffocation. The forest is full of lean saplings dead or dying with vainly stretching towards the light. Not one infant tree in a thousand lives to maturity; yet these survivors form an innumerable host, pressed together in struggling confusion, squeezed out of symmetry and robbed of normal development, as men are said to be in the level sameness of democratic society. Seen from above, their mingled tops spread in a sea of verdure basking in light; seen from below, all is shadow, through which spots of timid sunshine steal down among legions of lank, mossy trunks, toadstools and rank ferns, protruding roots, matted bushes, and rotting carcasses of fallen trees. A generation ago one might find here and there the rugged trunk of some great pine lifting its verdant spire above the undistinguished myriads of the forest. The woods of Maine had their aristocracy; but the axe of the woodman has laid them low, and these lords of the wilderness are seen no more.

The life and light of this grim solitude were in its countless streams and lakes, from little brooks stealing clear and cold under the alders, full of the small fry of trout, to the mighty arteries of the Penobscot and the Kennebec; from the great reservoir of Moosehead to a thousand nameless ponds shining in the hollow

places of the forest.

It had and still has its beast of prey,—wolves, savage, cowardly, and mean; bears, gentle and mild compared to their grisly relatives of the Far West, vegetarians when they can do no better, and not without something grotesque and quaint in manners and behavior; sometimes, though rarely, the strong and sullen wolverine; frequently the lynx; and now and then the fierce and agile cougar.

The human denizens of this wilderness were no less fierce, and far more dangerous. These were the various tribes and sub-tribes of the Abenakis, whose villages were on the Saco, the Kennebec, the Penobscot, and the other great watercourses. Most of them had been converted by the Jesuits, and, as we have seen already, some had been persuaded to remove to Canada, like the converted Iroquois of Caughnawaga.⁴⁰ The rest remained in their native haunts, where, under the direction of their missionaries, they could be used to keep the English settlements in check.

We know how busily they plied their tomahawks in William and Mary's War, and what havoc they made among the scattered settlements of the border.⁴¹ Another war with France was declared on the fourth of May, 1702, on which the Abenakis again assumed a threatening attitude. In June of the next year Dudley, governor of Massachusetts, called the chiefs of the various bands to a council at Casco. Here presently

⁴⁰ Count Frontenac, 231.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, chaps. xi. xvi. xvii.

appeared the Norridgewocks from the Kennebec, the Penobscots and Androscoggins from the rivers that bear their names, the Penacooks from the Merrimac, and the Pequawkets from the Saco, all well armed, and daubed with ceremonial paint. The principal among them, gathered under a large tent, were addressed by Dudley in a conciliatory speech. Their orator replied that they wanted nothing but peace, and that their thoughts were as far from war as the sun was from the earth,—words which they duly confirmed by a belt of wampum.⁴² Presents were distributed among them and received with apparent satisfaction, while two of their principal chiefs, known as Captain Samuel and Captain Bomazeen, declared that several French missionaries had lately come among them to excite them against the English, but that they were "firm as mountains," and would remain so "as long as the sun and moon endured." They ended the meeting with dancing, singing, and whoops of joy, followed by a volley of musketry, answered by another from the English. It was discovered, however, that the Indians had loaded their guns with ball, intending, as the English believed, to murder Dudley and his attendants if they could have done so

⁴² Penhallow, *History of the Wars of New England with the Eastern Indians*, 16 (ed. 1859). Penhallow was present at the council. In Judge Sewall's clumsy abstract of the proceedings (*Diary of Sewall*, ii. 85) the Indians are represented as professing neutrality. The governor and intendant of Canada write that the Abenakis had begun a treaty of neutrality with the English, but that as "les Jésuites observoient les sauvages, le traité ne fut pas conclu." They add that Rale, Jesuit missionary at Norridgewock, informs them that his Indians were ready to lift the hatchet against the English. *Vaudreuil et Beauharnois au Ministre*, 1703.

without danger to their chiefs, whom the governor had prudently kept about him. It was afterwards found, if we may believe a highly respectable member of the party, that two hundred French and Indians were on their way, "resolved to seize the governor, council, and gentlemen, and then to sacrifice the inhabitants at pleasure;" but when they arrived, the English officials had been gone three days.⁴³

The French governor, Vaudreuil, says that about this time some of the Abenakis were killed or maltreated by Englishmen. It may have been so: desperadoes, drunk or sober, were not rare along the frontier; but Vaudreuil gives no particulars, and the only English outrage that appears on record at the time was the act of a gang of vagabonds who plundered the house of the younger Saint-Castin, where the town of Castine now stands. He was Abenaki by his mother; but he was absent when the attack took place, and the marauders seem to have shed no blood. Nevertheless, within six weeks after the Treaty of Casco, every unprotected farmhouse in Maine was in a blaze.

The settlements of Maine, confined to the southwestern corner of what is now the State of Maine, extended along the coast in a feeble and broken line from Kittery to Casco. Ten years

⁴³ Penhallow, 17, 18 (ed. 1859). There was a previous meeting of conciliation between the English and the Abenakis in 1702. The Jesuit Bigot says that the Indians assured him that they had scornfully repelled the overtures of the English, and told them that they would always stand fast by the French. (*Relation des Abenakis*, 1702.) This is not likely. The Indians probably lied both to the Jesuit and to the English, telling to each what they knew would be most acceptable.

of murderous warfare had almost ruined them. East of the village of Wells little was left except one or two forts and the so-called "garrisons," which were private houses pierced with loopholes and having an upper story projecting over the lower, so that the defenders could fire down on assailants battering the door or piling fagots against the walls. A few were fenced with palisades, as was the case with the house of Joseph Storer at the east end of Wells, where an overwhelming force of French and Indians had been gallantly repulsed in the summer of 1692.⁴⁴ These fortified houses were, however, very rarely attacked, except by surprise and treachery. In case of alarm such of the inhabitants as found time took refuge in them with their families, and left their dwellings to the flames; for the first thought of the settler was to put his women and children beyond reach of the scalping-knife. There were several of these asylums in different parts of Wells; and without them the place must have been abandoned. In the little settlement of York, farther westward, there were five of them, which had saved a part of the inhabitants when the rest were surprised and massacred.

Wells was a long, straggling settlement, consisting at the beginning of William and Mary's War of about eighty houses and log-cabins,⁴⁵ strung at intervals along the north side of the rough track, known as the King's Road, which ran parallel to the sea. Behind the houses were rude, half-cleared pastures, and

⁴⁴ See "Count Frontenac," 371.

⁴⁵ Bourne, *History of Wells and Kennebunk*.

behind these again, the primeval forest. The cultivated land was on the south side of the road; in front of the houses, and beyond it, spread great salt-marshes, bordering the sea and haunted by innumerable game-birds.

The settlements of Maine were a dependency of Massachusetts,—a position that did not please their inhabitants, but which they accepted because they needed the help of their Puritan neighbors, from whom they differed widely both in their qualities and in their faults. The Indian wars that checked their growth had kept them in a condition more than half barbarous. They were a hard-working and hard-drinking race; for though tea and coffee were scarcely known, the land flowed with New England rum, which was ranked among the necessities of life. The better sort could read and write in a bungling way; but many were wholly illiterate, and it was not till long after Queen Anne's War that the remoter settlements established schools, taught by poor students from Harvard or less competent instructors, and held at first in private houses or under sheds. The church at Wells had been burned by the Indians; and though the settlers were beggared by the war, they voted in town-meeting to build another. The new temple, begun in 1699, was a plain wooden structure thirty feet square. For want of money the windows long remained unglazed, the walls without plaster, and the floor without seats; yet services were duly held here under direction of the minister, Samuel Emery, to whom they paid £45 a year, half in provincial currency, and half in farm-produce and fire-wood.

In spite of these efforts to maintain public worship, they were far from being a religious community; nor were they a peaceful one. Gossip and scandal ran riot; social jealousies abounded; and under what seemed entire democratic equality, the lazy, drunken, and shiftless envied the industrious and thrifty. Wells was infested, moreover, by several "frightfully turbulent women," as the chronicle styles them, from whose rabid tongues the minister himself did not always escape; and once, in its earlier days, the town had been indicted for not providing a ducking-stool to correct these breeders of discord.

Judicial officers were sometimes informally chosen by popular vote, and sometimes appointed by the governor of Massachusetts from among the inhabitants. As they knew no law, they gave judgment according to their own ideas of justice, and their sentences were oftener wanting in wisdom than in severity. Until after 1700 the county courts met by beat of drum at some of the primitive inns or taverns with which the frontier abounded.

At Wells and other outlying and endangered hamlets life was still exceedingly rude. The log-cabins of the least thrifty were no better furnished than Indian wigwams. The house of Edmond Littlefield, reputed the richest man in Wells, consisted of two bedrooms and a kitchen, which last served a great variety of uses, and was supplied with a table, a pewter pot, a frying-pan, and a skillet; but no chairs, cups, saucers, knives, forks, or spoons. In each of the two bedrooms there was a bed, a blanket, and a chest. Another village notable—Ensign John Barrett—was better

provided, being the possessor of two beds, two chests and a box, four pewter dishes, four earthen pots, two iron pots, seven trays, two buckets, some pieces of wooden-ware, a skillet, and a frying-pan. In the inventory of the patriarchal Francis Littlefield, who died in 1712, we find the exceptional items of one looking-glass, two old chairs, and two old books. Such of the family as had no bed slept on hay or straw, and no provision for the toilet is recorded.⁴⁶

On the tenth of August, 1703, these rugged borderers were about their usual callings, unconscious of danger,—the women at their household work, the men in the fields or on the more distant salt-marshes. The wife of Thomas Wells had reached the time of her confinement, and her husband had gone for a nurse. Some miles east of Wells's cabin lived Stephen Harding,—hunter, blacksmith, and tavern-keeper, a sturdy, good-natured man, who loved the woods, and whose frequent hunting trips sometimes led him nearly to the White Mountains. Distant gunshots were heard from the westward, and his quick eye presently discovered Indians approaching, on which he told his frightened wife to go with their infant to a certain oak-tree beyond the creek while he waited to learn whether the strangers were friends or foes.

That morning several parties of Indians had stolen out of the dismal woods behind the houses and farms of Wells, and

⁴⁶ The above particulars are drawn from the *History of Wells and Kennebunk*, by the late Edward E. Bourne, of Wells,—a work of admirable thoroughness, fidelity, and candor.

approached different dwellings of the far-extended settlement at about the same time. They entered the cabin of Thomas Wells, where his wife lay in the pains of childbirth, and murdered her and her two small children. At the same time they killed Joseph Sayer, a neighbor of Wells, with all his family.

Meanwhile Stephen Harding, having sent his wife and child to a safe distance, returned to his blacksmith's shop, and, seeing nobody, gave a defiant whoop; on which four Indians sprang at him from the bushes. He escaped through a back-door of the shop, eluded his pursuers, and found his wife and child in a cornfield, where the woman had fainted with fright. They spent the night in the woods, and on the next day, after a circuit of nine miles, reached the palisaded house of Joseph Storer.

They found the inmates in distress and agitation. Storer's daughter Mary, a girl of eighteen, was missing. The Indians had caught her, and afterwards carried her prisoner to Canada. Samuel Hill and his family were captured, and the younger children butchered. But it is useless to record the names and fate of the sufferers. Thirty-nine in all, chiefly women and children, were killed or carried off, and then the Indians disappeared as quickly and silently as they had come, leaving many of the houses in flames.

This raid upon Wells was only part of a combined attack on all the settlements from that place to Casco. Those eastward of Wells had been, as we have seen, abandoned in the last war, excepting the forts and fortified houses; but the inhabitants,

reassured, no doubt, by the Treaty of Casco, had begun to return. On this same day, the tenth of August, they were startled from their security. A band of Indians mixed with Frenchmen fell upon the settlements about the stone fort near the Falls of the Saco, killed eleven persons, captured twenty-four, and vainly attacked the fort itself. Others surprised the settlers at a place called Spurwink, and killed or captured twenty-two. Others, again, destroyed the huts of the fishermen at Cape Porpoise, and attacked the fortified house at Winter Harbor, the inmates of which, after a brave resistance, were forced to capitulate. The settlers at Scarborough were also in a fortified house, where they made a long and obstinate defence till help at last arrived. Nine families were settled at Purpooduck Point, near the present city of Portland. They had no place of refuge, and the men being, no doubt, fishermen, were all absent, when the Indians burst into the hamlet, butchered twenty-five women and children, and carried off eight.

The fort at Casco, or Falmouth, was held by Major March, with thirty-six men. He had no thought of danger, when three well-known chiefs from Norridgewock appeared with a white flag, and asked for an interview. As they seemed to be alone and unarmed, he went to meet them, followed by two or three soldiers and accompanied by two old men named Phippeny and Kent, inhabitants of the place. They had hardly reached the spot when the three chiefs drew hatchets from under a kind of mantle which they wore and sprang upon them, while other Indians, ambushed

near by, leaped up and joined in the attack. The two old men were killed at once; but March, who was noted for strength and agility, wrenched a hatchet from one of his assailants, and kept them all at bay till Sergeant Hook came to his aid with a file of men and drove them off.

They soon reappeared, burned the deserted cabins in the neighborhood, and beset the garrison in numbers that continually increased, till in a few days the entire force that had been busied in ravaging the scattered settlements was gathered around the place. It consisted of about five hundred Indians of several tribes, and a few Frenchmen under an officer named Beaubassin. Being elated with past successes, they laid siege to the fort, sheltering themselves under a steep bank by the water-side and burrowing their way towards the rampart. March could not dislodge them, and they continued their approaches till the third day, when Captain Southack, with the Massachusetts armed vessel known as the "Province Galley," sailed into the harbor, recaptured three small vessels that the Indians had taken along the coast, and destroyed a great number of their canoes, on which they gave up their enterprise and disappeared.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ On these attacks on the frontier of Maine, Penhallow, who well knew the country and the people, is the best authority. Niles, in his *Indian and French Wars*, copies him without acknowledgment, but not without blunders. As regards the attack on Wells, what particulars we have are mainly due to the research of the indefatigable Bourne. Compare Belknap, i. 330; Folsom, *History of Saco and Biddeford*, 198; *Coll. Maine Hist. Soc.*, iii. 140, 348; Williamson, *History of Maine*, ii. 42. Beaubassin is called "Bobasser" in most of the English accounts.

Such was the beginning of Queen Anne's War. These attacks were due less to the Abenakis than to the French who set them on. "Monsieur de Vaudreuil," writes the Jesuit historian Charlevoix, "formed a party of these savages, to whom he joined some Frenchmen under the direction of the Sieur de Beaubassin, when they effected some ravages of no great consequence; they killed, however, about three hundred men." This last statement is doubly incorrect. The whole number of persons killed and carried off during the August attacks did not much exceed one hundred and sixty;⁴⁸ and these were of both sexes and all ages, from octogenarians to newborn infants. The able-bodied men among them were few, as most of the attacks were made upon unprotected houses in the absence of the head of the family; and the only fortified place captured was the garrison-house at Winter Harbor, which surrendered on terms of capitulation. The instruments of this ignoble warfare and the revolting atrocities that accompanied it were all, or nearly all, converted Indians of the missions. Charlevoix has no word of disapproval for it, and seems to regard its partial success as a gratifying one so far as it went.

One of the objects was, no doubt, to check the progress of the English settlements; but, pursues Charlevoix, "the essential point was to commit the Abenakis in such a manner that they

⁴⁸ The careful and well-informed Belknap puts it at only 130. *History of New Hampshire*, i. 331.

could not draw back."⁴⁹ This object was constantly kept in view. The French claimed at this time that the territory of Acadia reached as far westward as the Kennebec, which therefore formed, in their view, the boundary between the rival nations, and they trusted in the Abenakis to defend this assumed line of demarcation. But the Abenakis sorely needed English guns, knives, hatchets, and kettles, and nothing but the utmost vigilance could prevent them from coming to terms with those who could supply their necessities. Hence the policy of the French authorities on the frontier of New England was the opposite of their policy on the frontier of New York. They left the latter undisturbed, lest by attacking the Dutch and English settlers they should stir up the Five Nations to attack Canada; while, on the other hand, they constantly spurred the Abenakis against New England, in order to avert the dreaded event of their making peace with her.

The attack on Wells, Casco, and the intervening settlements was followed by murders and depredations that lasted through the autumn and extended along two hundred miles of frontier. Thirty Indians attacked the village of Hampton, killed the Widow Mussey, a famous Quakeress, and then fled to escape pursuit. At Black Point nineteen men going to their work in the meadows were ambushed by two hundred Indians, and all but one were shot or captured. The fort was next attacked. It was garrisoned by eight men under Lieutenant Wyatt, who stood their ground for

⁴⁹ Charlevoix, ii. 289, 290 (quarto edition).

some time, and then escaped by means of a sloop in the harbor. At York the wife and children of Arthur Brandon were killed, and the Widow Parsons and her daughter carried off. At Berwick the Indians attacked the fortified house of Andrew Neal, but were repulsed with the loss of nine killed and many wounded, for which they revenged themselves by burning alive Joseph Ring, a prisoner whom they had taken. Early in February a small party of them hovered about the fortified house of Joseph Bradley at Haverhill, till, seeing the gate open and nobody on the watch, they rushed in. The woman of the house was boiling soap, and in her desperation she snatched up the kettle and threw the contents over them with such effect that one of them, it is said, was scalded to death. The man who should have been on the watch was killed, and several persons were captured, including the woman. It was the second time that she had been a prisoner in Indian hands. Half starved and bearing a heavy load, she followed her captors in their hasty retreat towards Canada. After a time she was safely delivered of an infant in the midst of the winter forest; but the child pined for want of sustenance, and the Indians hastened its death by throwing hot coals into its mouth when it cried. The astonishing vitality of the woman carried her to the end of the frightful journey. A Frenchman bought her from the Indians, and she was finally ransomed by her husband.

By far the most dangerous and harassing attacks were those of small parties skulking under the edge of the forest, or lying hidden for days together, watching their opportunity to murder

unawares, and vanishing when they had done so. Against such an enemy there was no defence. The Massachusetts government sent a troop of horse to Portsmouth, and another to Wells. These had the advantage of rapid movement in case of alarm along the roads and forest-paths from settlement to settlement; but once in the woods, their horses were worse than useless, and they could only fight on foot. Fighting, however, was rarely possible; for on reaching the scene of action they found nothing but mangled corpses and burning houses.

The best defence was to take the offensive. In September Governor Dudley sent three hundred and sixty men to the upper Saco, the haunt of the Pequawket tribe; but the place was deserted. Major, now Colonel, March soon after repeated the attempt, killing six Indians, and capturing as many more. The General Court offered £40 for every Indian scalp, and one Captain Tyng, in consequence, surprised an Indian village in midwinter and brought back five of these disgusting trophies. In the spring of 1704 word came from Albany that a band of French Indians had built a fort and planted corn at Coos meadows, high up the river Connecticut. On this, one Caleb Lyman with five friendly Indians, probably Mohegans, set out from Northampton, and after a long march through the forest, surprised, under cover of a thunderstorm, a wigwam containing nine warriors,—bound, no doubt, against the frontier. They killed seven of them; and this was all that was done at present in the way of reprisal or

prevention.⁵⁰

The murders and burnings along the borders were destined to continue with little variety and little interruption during ten years. It was a repetition of what the pedantic Cotton Mather calls *Decennium luctuosum*, or the "woful decade" of William and Mary's War. The wonder is that the outlying settlements were not abandoned. These ghastly, insidious, and ever-present dangers demanded a more obstinate courage than the hottest battle in the open field.

One curious frontier incident may be mentioned here, though it did not happen till towards the end of the war. In spite of poverty, danger, and tribulation, marrying and giving in marriage did not cease among the sturdy borderers; and on a day in September there was a notable wedding feast at the palisaded house of John Wheelwright, one of the chief men of Wells. Elisha Plaisted was to espouse Wheelwright's daughter Hannah, and many guests were assembled, some from Portsmouth, and even beyond it. Probably most of them came in sailboats; for the way by land was full of peril, especially on the road from York, which ran through dense woods, where Indians often waylaid the traveller. The bridegroom's father was present with the rest. It was a concourse of men in homespun, and women and girls in such improvised finery as their poor resources could supply; possibly, in default of better, some wore nightgowns, more or less disguised, over their daily dress, as happened on similar

⁵⁰ Penhallow, *Wars of New England with the Eastern Indians*.

occasions half a century later among the frontiersmen of West Virginia.⁵¹ After an evening of rough merriment and gymnastic dancing, the guests lay down to sleep under the roof of their host or in adjacent barns and sheds. When morning came, and they were preparing to depart, it was found that two horses were missing; and not doubting that they had strayed away, three young men—Sergeant Tucker, Joshua Downing, and Isaac Cole—went to find them. In a few minutes several gunshots were heard. The three young men did not return. Downing and Cole were killed, and Tucker was wounded and made prisoner.

Believing that, as usual, the attack came from some small scalping-party, Elisha Plaisted and eight or ten more threw themselves on the horses that stood saddled before the house, and galloped across the fields in the direction of the firing; while others ran to cut off the enemy's retreat. A volley was presently heard, and several of the party were seen running back towards the house. Elisha Plaisted and his companions had fallen into an ambushade of two hundred Indians. One or more of them were shot, and the unfortunate bridegroom was captured. The distress of his young wife, who was but eighteen, may be imagined.

Two companies of armed men in the pay of Massachusetts were then in Wells, and some of them had come to the wedding. Seventy marksmen went to meet the Indians, who ensconced themselves in the edge of the forest, whence they could not be dislodged. There was some desultory firing, and one of the

⁵¹ Doddridge, *Notes on Western Virginia and Pennsylvania*.

combatants was killed on each side, after which the whites gave up the attack, and Lieutenant Banks went forward with a flag of truce, in the hope of ransoming the prisoners. He was met by six chiefs, among whom were two noted Indians of his acquaintance, Bomazeen and Captain Nathaniel. They well knew that the living Plaisted was worth more than his scalp; and though they would not come to terms at once, they promised to meet the English at Richmond's Island in a few days and give up both him and Tucker on payment of a sufficient ransom. The flag of truce was respected, and Banks came back safe, bringing a hasty note to the elder Plaisted from his captive son. This note now lies before me, and it runs thus, in the dutiful formality of the olden time:—

Sir,—I am in the hands of a great many Indians, with which there is six captains. They say that what they will have for me is 50 pounds, and thirty pounds for Tucker, my fellow prisoner, in good goods, as broadcloth, some provisions, some tobacco pipes, Pomisstone [pumice-stone], stockings, and a little of all things. If you will, come to Richmond's Island in 5 days at farthest, for here is 200 Indians, and they belong to Canada.

If you do not come in 5 days, you will not see me, for Captain Nathaniel the Indian will not stay no longer, for the Canada Indians is not willing for to sell me. Pray, Sir, don't fail, for they have given me one day, for the days were but 4 at first. Give my kind love to my dear wife. This from your dutiful son till death,

Elisha Plaisted.

The alarm being spread and a sufficient number of men mustered, they set out to attack the enemy and recover the prisoners by force; but not an Indian could be found.

Bomazeen and Captain Nathaniel were true to the rendezvous; in due time Elisha Plaisted was ransomed and restored to his bride.⁵²

⁵² On this affair, see the note of Elisha Plaisted in Massachusetts Archives; *Richard Waldron to Governor Dudley, Portsmouth, 19 September, 1712*; Bourne, *Wells and Kennebunk*, 278.

CHAPTER IV

1704-1740

DEERFIELD

Hertel de Rouville.—A Frontier Village.—Rev. John Williams.—The Surprise.—Defence of the Stebbins House.—Attempted Rescue.—The Meadow Fight.—The Captives.—The Northward March.—Mrs. Williams killed.—The Minister's Journey.—Kindness of Canadians.—A Stubborn Heretic.—Eunice Williams.—Converted Captives.—John Sheldon's Mission.—Exchange of Prisoners.—An English Squaw.—The Gill Family

About midwinter the governor of Canada sent another large war-party against the New England border. The object of attack was an unoffending hamlet, that from its position could never be a menace to the French, and the destruction of which could profit them nothing. The aim of the enterprise was not military, but political. "I have sent no war-party towards Albany," writes Vaudreuil, "because we must do nothing that might cause a rupture between us and the Iroquois; but we must keep things

astir in the direction of Boston, or else the Abenakis will declare for the English." In short, the object was fully to commit these savages to hostility against New England, and convince them at the same time that the French would back their quarrel.⁵³

The party consisted, according to French accounts, of fifty Canadians and two hundred Abenakis and Caughnawagas,—the latter of whom, while trading constantly with Albany, were rarely averse to a raid against Massachusetts or New Hampshire.⁵⁴ The command was given to the younger Hertel de Rouville, who was accompanied by four of his brothers. They began their march in the depth of winter, journeyed nearly three hundred miles on snow-shoes through the forest, and approached their destination on the afternoon of the twenty-eighth of February, 1704. It was the village of Deerfield, which then formed the extreme northwestern frontier of Massachusetts,—its feeble neighbor, the infant settlement of Northfield, a little higher up the Connecticut, having been abandoned during the last war. Rouville halted his followers at a place now called Petty's Plain, two miles from the village; and here, under the shelter of a pine forest, they all lay hidden, shivering with cold,—for they dared not make fires,—and hungry as wolves, for their provisions were spent. Though

⁵³ *Vaudreuil au Ministre, 14 Novembre, 1703; Ibid., 3 Avril, 1704; Vaudreuil et Beauharnois au Ministre 17 Novembre, 1704.* French writers say that the English surprised and killed some of the Abenakis, who thereupon asked help from Canada. This perhaps refers to the expeditions of Colonel March and Captain Tyng, who, after the bloody attacks upon the settlements of Maine, made reprisal upon Abenaki camps.

⁵⁴ English accounts make the whole number 342.

their numbers, by the lowest account, were nearly equal to the whole population of Deerfield,—men, women, and children,—they had no thought of an open attack, but trusted to darkness and surprise for an easy victory.

Deerfield stood on a plateau above the river meadows, and the houses—forty-one in all—were chiefly along the road towards the villages of Hadley and Hatfield, a few miles distant. In the middle of the place, on a rising ground called Meeting-house Hill, was a small square wooden meeting-house. This, with about fifteen private houses, besides barns and sheds, was enclosed by a fence of palisades eight feet high, flanked by "mounts," or blockhouses, at two or more of the corners. The four sides of this palisaded enclosure, which was called the fort, measured in all no less than two hundred and two rods, and within it lived some of the principal inhabitants of the village, of which it formed the centre or citadel. Chief among its inmates was John Williams, the minister, a man of character and education, who, after graduating at Harvard, had come to Deerfield when it was still suffering under the ruinous effects of King Philip's War, and entered on his ministry with a salary of sixty pounds in depreciated New England currency, payable, not in money, but in wheat, Indian-corn, and pork.⁵⁵ His parishioners built him a house, he married, and had now eight children, one of whom was absent with friends at Hadley.⁵⁶ His next neighbor was Benoni

⁵⁵ Stephen W. Williams, *Biographical Memoir of Rev. John Williams*.

⁵⁶ *Account of y^e destruction at Dereft^d, February 29, 1703/4.*

Stebbins, sergeant in the county militia, who lived a few rods from the meeting-house. About fifty yards distant, and near the northwest angle of the enclosure, stood the house of Ensign John Sheldon, a framed building, one of the largest in the village, and, like that of Stebbins, made bullet-proof by a layer of bricks between the outer and inner sheathing, while its small windows and its projecting upper story also helped to make it defensible.

The space enclosed by the palisade, though much too large for effective defence, served in time of alarm as an asylum for the inhabitants outside, whose houses were scattered,—some on the north towards the hidden enemy, and some on the south towards Hadley and Hatfield. Among those on the south side was that of the militia captain, Jonathan Wells, which had a palisade of its own, and, like the so-called fort, served as an asylum for the neighbors.

These private fortified houses were sometimes built by the owners alone, though more often they were the joint work of the owners and of the inhabitants, to whose safety they contributed. The palisade fence that enclosed the central part of the village was made under a vote of the town, each inhabitant being required to do his share; and as they were greatly impoverished by the last war, the General Court of the province remitted for a time a part of their taxes in consideration of a work which aided the general defence.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Papers in the Archives of Massachusetts. Among these, a letter of Rev. John Williams to the governor, 21 October, 1703, states that the palisade is rotten, and must

Down to the Peace of Ryswick the neighborhood had been constantly infested by scalping-parties, and once the village had been attacked by a considerable force of French and Indians, who were beaten off. Of late there had been warnings of fresh disturbance. Lord Cornbury, governor of New York, wrote that he had heard through spies that Deerfield was again to be attacked, and a message to the same effect came from Peter Schuyler, who had received intimations of the danger from Mohawks lately on a visit to their Caughnawaga relatives. During the autumn the alarm was so great that the people took refuge within the palisades, and the houses of the enclosure were crowded with them; but the panic had now subsided, and many, though not all, had returned to their homes. They were reassured by the presence of twenty volunteers from the villages below, whom, on application from the minister, Williams, the General Court had sent as a garrison to Deerfield, where they were lodged in the houses of the villagers. On the night when Hertel de Rouville and his band lay hidden among the pines there were in all the settlement a little less than three hundred souls, of whom two hundred and sixty-eight were inhabitants, twenty were yeomen soldiers of the garrison, two were visitors from Hatfield, and three were negro slaves. They were of all ages,—from the Widow Allison, in her eighty-fifth year, to the infant son of Deacon French, aged four weeks.⁵⁸

be rebuilt.

⁵⁸ The names of nearly all the inhabitants are preserved, and even the ages of most of

Heavy snows had lately fallen and buried the clearings, the meadow, and the frozen river to the depth of full three feet. On the northwestern side the drifts were piled nearly to the top of the palisade fence, so that it was no longer an obstruction to an active enemy.

As the afternoon waned, the sights and sounds of the little border hamlet were, no doubt, like those of any other rustic New England village at the end of a winter day,—an ox-sledge creaking on the frosty snow as it brought in the last load of firewood, boys in homespun snowballing one another in the village street, farmers feeding their horses and cattle in the barns, a matron drawing a pail of water with the help of one of those long well-sweeps still used in some remote districts, or a girl bringing a pail of milk from the cow-shed. In the houses, where one room served as kitchen, dining-room, and parlor, the housewife cooked the evening meal, children sat at their bowls of mush and milk, and the men of the family, their day's work over, gathered about the fire, while perhaps some village coquette sat in the corner with fingers busy at the spinning-wheel, and ears intent on the stammered wooings of her rustic lover. Deerfield kept early hours, and it is likely that by nine o'clock all were in their beds. There was a patrol inside the palisade, but there was little discipline among these extemporized soldiers; the watchers

them have been ascertained, through the indefatigable research of Mr. George Sheldon, of Deerfield, among contemporary records. The house of Thomas French, the town clerk, was not destroyed, and his papers were saved.

grew careless as the frosty night went on; and it is said that towards morning they, like the villagers, betook themselves to their beds.

Rouville and his men, savage with hunger, lay shivering under the pines till about two hours before dawn; then, leaving their packs and their snow-shoes behind, they moved cautiously towards their prey. There was a crust on the snow strong enough to bear their weight, though not to prevent a rustling noise as it crunched under the feet of so many men. It is said that from time to time Rouville commanded a halt, in order that the sentinels, if such there were, might mistake the distant sound for rising and falling gusts of wind. In any case, no alarm was given till they had mounted the palisade and dropped silently into the unconscious village. Then with one accord they screeched the war-whoop, and assailed the doors of the houses with axes and hatchets.

The hideous din startled the minister, Williams, from his sleep. Half-wakened, he sprang out of bed, and saw dimly a crowd of savages bursting through the shattered door. He shouted to two soldiers who were lodged in the house; and then, with more valor than discretion, snatched a pistol that hung at the head of the bed, cocked it, and snapped it at the breast of the foremost Indian, who proved to be a Caughnawaga chief. It missed fire, or Williams would, no doubt, have been killed on the spot. Amid the screams of his terrified children, three of the party seized him and bound him fast; for they came well provided with cords, since prisoners had a market value. Nevertheless, in the

first fury of their attack they dragged to the door and murdered two of the children and a negro woman called Parthena, who was probably their nurse. In an upper room lodged a young man named Stoddard, who had time to snatch a cloak, throw himself out of the window, climb the palisade, and escape in the darkness. Half-naked as he was, he made his way over the snow to Hatfield, binding his bare feet with strips torn from the cloak.

They kept Williams shivering in his shirt for an hour while a frightful uproar of yells, shrieks, and gunshots sounded from without. At length they permitted him, his wife, and five remaining children to dress themselves. Meanwhile the Indians and their allies burst into most of the houses, killed such of the men as resisted, butchered some of the women and children, and seized and bound the rest. Some of the villagers escaped in the confusion, like Stoddard, and either fled half dead with cold towards Hatfield, or sought refuge in the fortified house of Jonathan Wells.

The house of Stebbins, the minister's next neighbor, had not been attacked so soon as the rest, and the inmates had a little time for preparation. They consisted of Stebbins himself, with his wife and five children, David Hoyt, Joseph Catlin, Benjamin Church, a namesake of the old Indian fighter of Philip's War, and three other men,—probably refugees who had brought their wives and families within the palisaded enclosure for safety. Thus the house contained seven men, four or five women, and a considerable number of children. Though the walls were bullet-proof, it was

not built for defence. The men, however, were well supplied with guns, powder, and lead, and they seem to have found some means of barricading the windows. When the enemy tried to break in, they drove them back with loss. On this, the French and Indians gathered in great numbers before the house, showered bullets upon it, and tried to set it on fire. They were again repulsed, with the loss of several killed and wounded; among the former a Caughnawaga chief, and among the latter a French officer. Still the firing continued. If the assailants had made a resolute assault, the defenders must have been overpowered; but to risk lives in open attack was contrary to every maxim of forest warfare. The women in the house behaved with great courage, and moulded bullets, which the men shot at the enemy. Stebbins was killed outright, and Church was wounded, as was also the wife of David Hoyt. At length most of the French and Indians, disgusted with the obstinacy of the defence, turned their attention to other quarters; though some kept up their fire under cover of the meeting-house and another building within easy range of gunshot.

This building was the house of Ensign John Sheldon, already mentioned. The Indians had had some difficulty in mastering it; for the door being of thick oak plank, studded with nails of wrought iron and well barred, they could not break it open. After a time, however, they hacked a hole in it, through which they fired and killed Mrs. Sheldon as she sat on the edge of a bed in a lower room. Her husband, a man of great resolution, seems to

have been absent. Their son John, with Hannah his wife, jumped from an upper chamber window. The young woman sprained her ankle in the fall, and lay helpless, but begged her husband to run to Hatfield for aid, which he did, while she remained a prisoner. The Indians soon got in at a back door, seized Mercy Sheldon, a little girl of two years, and dashed out her brains on the door-stone. Her two brothers and her sister Mary, a girl of sixteen, were captured. The house was used for a short time as a depot for prisoners, and here also was brought the French officer wounded in the attack on the Stebbins house. A family tradition relates that as he lay in great torment he begged for water, and that it was brought him by one of the prisoners, Mrs. John Catlin, whose husband, son, and infant grandson had been killed, and who, nevertheless, did all in her power to relieve the sufferings of the wounded man. Probably it was in recognition of this charity that when the other prisoners were led away, Mrs. Catlin was left behind. She died of grief a few weeks later.

The sun was scarcely an hour high when the miserable drove of captives was conducted across the river to the foot of a mountain or high hill. Williams and his family were soon compelled to follow, and his house was set on fire. As they led him off he saw that other houses within the palisade were burning, and that all were in the power of the enemy except that of his neighbor Stebbins, where the gallant defenders still kept their assailants at bay. Having collected all their prisoners, the main body of the French and Indians began to withdraw

towards the pine forest, where they had left their packs and snow-shoes, and to prepare for a retreat before the country should be roused, first murdering in cold blood Marah Carter, a little girl of five years, whom they probably thought unequal to the march. Several parties, however, still lingered in the village, firing on the Stebbins house, killing cattle, hogs, and sheep, and gathering such plunder as the place afforded.

Early in the attack, and while it was yet dark, the light of burning houses, reflected from the fields of snow, had been seen at Hatfield, Hadley, and Northampton. The alarm was sounded through the slumbering hamlets, and parties of men mounted on farm-horses, with saddles or without, hastened to the rescue, not doubting that the fires were kindled by Indians. When the sun was about two hours high, between thirty and forty of them were gathered at the fortified house of Jonathan Wells, at the southern end of the village. The houses of this neighborhood were still standing, and seem not to have been attacked,—the stubborn defence of the Stebbins house having apparently prevented the enemy from pushing much beyond the palisaded enclosure. The house of Wells was full of refugee families. A few Deerfield men here joined the horsemen from the lower towns, as also did four or five of the yeoman soldiers who had escaped the fate of most of their comrades. The horsemen left their horses within Wells's fence; he himself took the lead, and the whole party rushed in together at the southern gate of the palisaded enclosure, drove out the plunderers, and retook a part of their plunder. The assailants

of the Stebbins house, after firing at it for three hours, were put to flight, and those of its male occupants who were still alive joined their countrymen, while the women and children ran back for harborage to the house of Wells.

Wells and his men, now upwards of fifty, drove the flying enemy more than a mile across the river meadows, and ran in headlong pursuit over the crusted snow, killing a considerable number. In the eagerness of the chase many threw off their overcoats, and even their jackets. Wells saw the danger, and vainly called on them to stop. Their blood was up, and most of them were young and inexperienced.

Meanwhile the firing at the village had been heard by Rouville's main body, who had already begun their retreat northward. They turned back to support their comrades, and hid themselves under the bank of the river till the pursuers drew near, when they gave them a close volley and rushed upon them with the war-whoop. Some of the English were shot down, and the rest driven back. There was no panic. "We retreated," says Wells, "facing about and firing." When they reached the palisade they made a final stand, covering by their fire such of their comrades as had fallen within range of musket-shot, and thus saving them from the scalping-knife. The French did not try to dislodge them. Nine of them had been killed, several were wounded, and one was captured.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ On the thirty-first of May, 1704, Jonathan Wells and Ebenezer Wright petitioned the General Court for compensation for the losses of those who drove the enemy

The number of English carried off prisoners was one hundred and eleven, and the number killed was according to one list forty-seven, and according to another fifty-three, the latter including some who were smothered in the cellars of their burning houses. The names, and in most cases the ages, of both captives and slain are preserved. Those who escaped with life and freedom were, by the best account, one hundred and thirty-seven. An official tabular statement, drawn up on the spot, sets the number of houses burned at seventeen. The house of the town clerk, Thomas French, escaped, as before mentioned, and the town records, with other papers in his charge, were saved. The meeting-house also was left standing. The house of Sheldon was hastily set on fire by the French and Indians when their rear was driven out of the village by Wells and his men; but the fire was extinguished, and "the Old Indian House," as it was called, stood till the year 1849. Its door, deeply scarred with hatchets, and with a hole cut near the middle, is still preserved in the Memorial Hall

out of Deerfield and chased them into the meadow. The petition, which was granted, gives an account of the affair, followed by a list of all the men engaged. They number fifty-seven, including the nine who were killed. A list of the plunder retaken from the enemy, consisting of guns, blankets, hatchets, etc., is also added. Several other petitions for the relief of men wounded at the same time are preserved in the archives of Massachusetts. In 1736 the survivors of the party, with the representatives of those who had died, petitioned the General Court for allotments of land, in recognition of their services. This petition also was granted. It is accompanied by a narrative written by Wells. These and other papers on the same subject have been recently printed by Mr. George Sheldon, of Deerfield.

at Deerfield.⁶⁰

Vaudreuil wrote to the minister, Ponchartrain, that the French lost two or three killed, and twenty or twenty-one wounded, Rouville himself being among the latter. This cannot include the Indians, since there is proof that the enemy left behind a considerable number of their dead. Wherever resistance was possible, it had been of the most prompt and determined character.⁶¹

Long before noon the French and Indians were on their northward march with their train of captives. More armed men came up from the settlements below, and by midnight about eighty were gathered at the ruined village. Couriers had been sent to rouse the country, and before evening of the next day (the first of March) the force at Deerfield was increased to two hundred and fifty; but a thaw and a warm rain had set in, and as few of the men had snow-shoes, pursuit was out of the question. Even could the agile savages and their allies have been overtaken, the probable consequence would have been the murdering of the

⁶⁰ After the old house was demolished, this door was purchased by my friend Dr. Daniel Denison Slade, and given by him to the town of Deerfield, on condition that it should be carefully preserved. For an engraving of "the Old Indian House," see Hoyt, *Indian Wars* (ed. 1824).

⁶¹ Governor Dudley, writing to Lord – on 21 April, 1704, says that thirty dead bodies of the enemy were found in the village and on the meadow. Williams, the minister, says that they did not seem inclined to rejoice over their success, and continued for several days to bury members of their party who died of wounds on the return march. He adds that he learned in Canada that they lost more than forty, though Vaudreuil assured him that they lost but eleven.

captives to prevent their escape.

In spite of the foul blow dealt upon it, Deerfield was not abandoned. Such of its men as were left were taken as soldiers into the pay of the province, while the women and children were sent to the villages below. A small garrison was also stationed at the spot, under command of Captain Jonathan Wells, and thus the village held its ground till the storm of war should pass over.⁶²

⁶² On the attack of Deerfield, see Williams, *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion*. This is the narrative of the minister, John Williams. *Account of the Captivity of Stephen Williams, written by himself*. This is the narrative of one of the minister's sons, eleven years old when captured. It is printed in the Appendix to the *Biographical Memoir of Rev. John Williams* (Hartford, 1837); *An account of y^e destruction at Derefd. feb^r. 29, 1703/4, in Proceedings of the Mass. Hist. Soc., 1867, p. 478*. This valuable document was found among the papers of Fitz-John Winthrop, governor of Connecticut. The authorities of that province, on hearing of the catastrophe at Deerfield, promptly sent an armed force to its relief, which, however, could not arrive till long after the enemy were gone. The paper in question seems to be the official report of one of the Connecticut officers. After recounting what had taken place, he gives a tabular list of the captives, the slain, and those who escaped, with the estimated losses in property of each inhabitant. The list of captives is not quite complete. Compare the lists given by Stephen Williams at the end of his narrative. The town records of Hatfield give various particulars concerning the attack on its unfortunate neighbor, as do the letters of Colonel Samuel Partridge, commanding the militia of the county. Hoyt, *Antiquarian Researches*, gives a valuable account of it. The careful and unwearied research of Mr. George Sheldon, the lineal descendant of Ensign John Sheldon, among all sources, public or private, manuscript or in print, that could throw light on the subject cannot be too strongly commended, and I am indebted to him for much valued information. Penhallow's short account is inexact, and many of the more recent narratives are not only exaggerated, but sometimes absurdly incorrect. The French notices of the affair are short, and give few particulars. Vaudreuil in one letter sets the number of prisoners at one hundred and fifty, and increases it in another to two hundred and fifty. Ramesay, governor of Montreal, who hated Hertel de Rouville, and

We have seen that the minister, Williams, with his wife and family, were led from their burning house across the river to the foot of the mountain, where the crowd of terrified and disconsolate captives—friends, neighbors, and relatives—were already gathered. Here they presently saw the fight in the meadow, and were told that if their countrymen attempted a rescue, they should all be put to death. "After this," writes Williams, "we went up the mountain, and saw the smoke of the fires in town, and beheld the awful desolation of Deerfield; and before we marched any farther they killed a sucking child of the English."

The French and Indians marched that afternoon only four or five miles,—to Greenfield meadows,—where they stopped to encamp, dug away the snow, laid spruce-boughs on the ground for beds, and bound fast such of the prisoners as seemed able to escape. The Indians then held a carousal on some liquor they had found in the village, and in their drunken rage murdered a negro man belonging to Williams. In spite of their precautions, Joseph Alexander, one of the prisoners, escaped during the night, at which they were greatly incensed; and Rouville ordered Williams

bore no love to Vaudreuil, says that fifty-six women and children were murdered on the way to Canada,—which is a gross exaggeration. (*Ramesay au Ministre, 14 Novembre, 1704.*) The account by Dr. Ethier in the *Revue Canadienne* of 1874 is drawn entirely from the *Redeemed Captive* of Williams, with running comments by the Canadian writer, but no new information. The comments chiefly consist in praise of Williams for truth when he speaks favorably of the Canadians, and charges of lying when he speaks otherwise.

to tell his companions in misfortune that if any more of them ran off, the rest should be burned alive.⁶³

The prisoners were the property of those who had taken them. Williams had two masters, one of the three who had seized him having been shot in the attack on the house of Stebbins. His principal owner was a surly fellow who would not let him speak to the other prisoners; but as he was presently chosen to guard the rear, the minister was left in the hands of his other master, who allowed him to walk beside his wife and help her on the way. Having borne a child a few weeks before, she was in no condition for such a march, and felt that her hour was near. Williams speaks of her in the strongest terms of affection. She made no complaint, and accepted her fate with resignation. "We discoursed," he says, "of the happiness of those who had God for a father and friend, as also that it was our reasonable duty quietly to submit to his will." Her thoughts were for her remaining children, whom she commended to her husband's care. Their intercourse was short. The Indian who had gone to the rear of the train soon returned, separated them, ordered Williams to the front, "and so made me take a last farewell of my dear wife, the desire of my eyes and companion in many mercies and afflictions." They came soon after to Green River, a stream then about knee-deep, and so swift that the water had not frozen. After wading it with difficulty, they climbed a snow-covered hill beyond. The minister, with strength

⁶³ John Williams, *The Redeemed Captive*. Compare Stephen Williams, *Account of the Captivity*, etc.

almost spent, was permitted to rest a few moments at the top; and as the other prisoners passed by in turn, he questioned each for news of his wife. He was not left long in suspense. She had fallen from weakness in fording the stream, but gained her feet again, and, drenched in the icy current, struggled to the farther bank, when the savage who owned her, finding that she could not climb the hill, killed her with one stroke of his hatchet. Her body was left on the snow till a few of her townsmen, who had followed the trail, found it a day or two after, carried it back to Deerfield, and buried it in the churchyard.

On the next day the Indians killed an infant and a little girl of eleven years; on the day following, Friday, they tomahawked a woman, and on Saturday four others. This apparent cruelty was in fact a kind of mercy. The victims could not keep up with the party, and the death-blow saved them from a lonely and lingering death from cold and starvation. Some of the children, when spent with the march, were carried on the backs of their owners,—partly, perhaps, through kindness, and partly because every child had its price.

On the fourth day of the march they came to the mouth of West River, which enters the Connecticut a little above the present town of Brattleboro'. Some of the Indians were discontented with the distribution of the captives, alleging that others had got more than their share; on which the whole troop were mustered together, and some changes of ownership were agreed upon. At this place dog-trains and sledges had been left,

and these served to carry their wounded, as well as some of the captive children. Williams was stripped of the better part of his clothes, and others given him instead, so full of vermin that they were a torment to him through all the journey. The march now continued with pitiless speed up the frozen Connecticut, where the recent thaw had covered the ice with slush and water ankle-deep.

On Sunday they made a halt, and the minister was permitted to preach a sermon from the text, "Hear, all people, and behold my sorrow: my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity." Then amid the ice, the snow, the forest, and the savages, his forlorn flock joined their voices in a psalm.⁶⁴ On Monday guns were heard from the rear, and the Indians and their allies, in great alarm, bound their prisoners fast, and prepared for battle. It proved, however, that the guns had been fired at wild geese by some of their own number; on which they recovered their spirits, fired a volley for joy, and boasted that the English could not overtake them.⁶⁵ More women fainted by the way and died under the hatchet,—some with pious resignation, some with despairing apathy, some with a desperate joy.

Two hundred miles of wilderness still lay between them and the Canadian settlements. It was a waste without a house or even

⁶⁴ The small stream at the mouth of which Williams is supposed to have preached is still called Williams River.

⁶⁵ Stephen Williams, *Account of the Captivity*, etc. His father also notices the incident.

a wigwam, except here and there the bark shed of some savage hunter. At the mouth of White River, the party divided into small bands,—no doubt in order to subsist by hunting, for provisions were fast failing. The Williams family were separated. Stephen was carried up the Connecticut; Samuel and Eunice, with two younger children, were carried off in various directions; while the wretched father, along with two small children of one of his parishioners, was compelled to follow his Indian masters up the valley of White River. One of the children—a little girl—was killed on the next morning by her Caughnawaga owner, who was unable to carry her.⁶⁶ On the next Sunday the minister was left in camp with one Indian and the surviving child,—a boy of nine,—while the rest of the party were hunting. "My spirit," he says, "was almost overwhelmed within me." But he found comfort in the text, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive." Nor was his hope deceived. His youngest surviving child,—a boy of four,—though harshly treated by his owners, was carried on their shoulders or dragged on a sledge to the end of the journey. His youngest daughter—seven years old—was treated with great kindness throughout. Samuel and Eunice suffered much from hunger, but were dragged on sledges when too faint to walk. Stephen nearly starved to death; but after eight months in the forest, he safely reached Chambly with his Indian masters.

⁶⁶ The name Macquas (Mohawks) is always given to the Caughnawagas by the elder Williams.

Of the whole band of captives, only about half ever again saw friends and home. Seventeen broke down on the way and were killed; while David Hoyt and Jacob Hix died of starvation at Coos Meadows, on the upper Connecticut. During the entire march, no woman seems to have been subjected to violence, and this holds true, with rare exceptions, in all the Indian wars of New England. This remarkable forbearance towards female prisoners, so different from the practice of many western tribes, was probably due to a form of superstition, aided perhaps by the influence of the missionaries.⁶⁷ It is to be observed, however, that the heathen savages of King Philip's War, who had never seen a Jesuit, were no less forbearing in this respect.

The hunters of Williams's party killed five moose, the flesh of which, smoked and dried, was carried on their backs and that of the prisoner whom they had provided with snow-shoes. Thus burdened, the minister toiled on, following his masters along the frozen current of White River till, crossing the snowy backs of the Green Mountains, they struck the headwaters of the stream then called French River, now the Winooski, or Onion. Being in great fear of a thaw, they pushed on with double speed. Williams was not used to snow-shoes, and they gave him those painful cramps of the legs and ankles called in Canada *mal à la raquette*. One morning at dawn he was waked by his chief master and ordered to get up, say his prayers, and eat his breakfast, for they

⁶⁷ The Iroquois are well known to have had superstitions in connection with sexual abstinence.

must make a long march that day. The minister was in despair. "After prayer," he says, "I arose from my knees; but my feet were so tender, swollen, bruised, and full of pain that I could scarce stand upon them without holding on the wigwam. And when the Indians said, 'You must run to-day,' I answered I could not run. My master, pointing to his hatchet, said to me, 'Then I must dash out your brains and take your scalp.'" The Indian proved better than his word, and Williams was suffered to struggle on as he could. "God wonderfully supported me," he writes, "and my strength was restored and renewed to admiration." He thinks that he walked that day forty miles on the snow. Following the Winooski to its mouth, the party reached Lake Champlain a little north of the present city of Burlington. Here the swollen feet of the prisoner were tortured by the rough ice, till snow began to fall and cover it with a soft carpet. Bending under his load, and powdered by the falling flakes, he toiled on till, at noon of a Saturday, lean, tired, and ragged, he and his masters reached the French outpost of Chambly, twelve or fifteen miles from Montreal.

Here the unhappy wayfarer was treated with great kindness both by the officers of the fort and by the inhabitants, one of the chief among whom lodged him in his house and welcomed him to his table. After a short stay at Chambly, Williams and his masters set out in a canoe for Sorel. On the way a Frenchwoman came down to the bank of the river and invited the party to her house, telling the minister that she herself had once been a prisoner

among the Indians, and knew how to feel for him. She seated him at a table, spread a table-cloth, and placed food before him, while the Indians, to their great indignation, were supplied with a meal in the chimney-corner. Similar kindness was shown by the inhabitants along the way till the party reached their destination, the Abenaki village of St. Francis, to which his masters belonged. Here there was a fort, in which lived two Jesuits, directors of the mission, and here Williams found several English children, captured the summer before during the raid on the settlements of Maine, and already transformed into little Indians both in dress and behavior. At the gate of the fort one of the Jesuits met him, and asked him to go into the church and give thanks to God for sparing his life, to which he replied that he would give thanks in some other place. The priest then commanded him to go, which he refused to do. When on the next day the bell rang for mass, one of his Indian masters seized him and dragged him into the church, where he got behind the door, and watched the service from his retreat with extreme disapprobation. One of the Jesuits telling him that he would go to hell for not accepting the apostolic traditions, and trusting only in the Bible, he replied that he was glad to know that Christ was to be his judge, and not they. His chief master, who was a zealot in his way, and as much bound to the rites and forms of the Church as he had been before his conversion to his "medicines," or practices of heathen superstition, one day ordered him to make the sign of the cross, and on his refusal, tried to force him. But as the minister was

tough and muscular, the Indian could not guide his hand. Then, pulling out a crucifix that hung at his neck, he told Williams in broken English to kiss it; and being again refused, he brandished his hatchet over him and threatened to knock out his brains. This failing of the desired effect, he threw down the hatchet and said he would first bite out the minister's finger-nails,—a form of torture then in vogue among the northern Indians, both converts and heathen. Williams offered him a hand and invited him to begin; on which he gave the thumb-nail a gripe with his teeth, and then let it go, saying, "No good minister, bad as the devil." The failure seems to have discouraged him, for he made no further attempt to convert the intractable heretic.

The direct and simple narrative of Williams is plainly the work of an honest and courageous man. He was the most important capture of the year; and the governor, hearing that he was at St. Francis, despatched a canoe to request the Jesuits of the mission to send him to Montreal. Thither, therefore, his masters carried him, expecting, no doubt, a good price for their prisoner. Vaudreuil, in fact, bought him, exchanged his tattered clothes for good ones, lodged him in his house, and, in the words of Williams, "was in all respects relating to my outward man courteous and charitable to admiration." He sent for two of the minister's children who were in the town, bought his eldest daughter from the Indians, and promised to do what he could to get the others out of their hands. His youngest son was bought by a lady of the place, and his eldest by a merchant. His youngest

daughter, Eunice, then seven or eight years old, was at the mission of St. Louis, or Caughnawaga. Vaudreuil sent a priest to conduct Williams thither and try to ransom the child. But the Jesuits of the mission flatly refused to let him speak to or see her. Williams says that Vaudreuil was very angry at hearing of this, and a few days after, he went himself to Caughnawaga with the minister. This time the Jesuits, whose authority within their mission seemed almost to override that of the governor himself, yielded so far as to permit the father to see his child, on condition that he spoke to no other English prisoner. He talked with her for an hour, exhorting her never to forget her catechism, which she had learned by rote. Vaudreuil and his wife afterwards did all in their power to procure her ransom; but the Indians, or the missionaries in their name, would not let her go. "She is there still," writes Williams two years later, "and has forgotten to speak English." What grieved him still more, Eunice had forgotten her catechism.

While he was at Montreal, his movements were continually watched, lest he should speak to other prisoners and prevent their conversion. He thinks these precautions were due to the priests, whose constant endeavor it was to turn the captives, or at least the younger and more manageable among them, into Catholics and Canadians. The governor's kindness towards him never failed, though he told him that he should not be set free till the English gave up one Captain Baptiste, a noted sea-rover whom they had captured some time before.

He was soon after sent down the river to Quebec along with the superior of the Jesuits. Here he lodged seven weeks with a member of the council, who treated him kindly, but told him that if he did not avoid intercourse with the other English prisoners he would be sent farther away. He saw much of the Jesuits, who courteously asked him to dine; though he says that one of them afterwards made some Latin verses about him, in which he was likened to a captive wolf. Another Jesuit told him that when the mission Indians set out on their raid against Deerfield, he charged them to baptize all children before killing them,—such, he said, was his desire for the salvation even of his enemies. To murdering the children after they were baptized, he appears to have made no objection. Williams says that in their dread lest he should prevent the conversion of the other prisoners, the missionaries promised him a pension from the King and free intercourse with his children and neighbors if he would embrace the Catholic faith and remain in Canada; to which he answered that he would do so without reward if he thought their religion was true, but as he believed the contrary, "the offer of the whole world would tempt him no more than a blackberry."

To prevent him more effectually from perverting the minds of his captive countrymen, and fortifying them in their heresy, he was sent to Château Richer, a little below Quebec, and lodged with the parish priest, who was very kind to him. "I am persuaded," he writes, "that he abhorred their sending down the heathen to commit outrages against the English, saying it is more

like committing murders than carrying on war."

He was sorely tried by the incessant efforts to convert the prisoners. "Sometimes they would tell me my children, sometimes my neighbors, were turned to be of their religion. Some made it their work to allure poor souls by flatteries and great promises; some threatened, some offered abuse to such as refused to go to church and be present at mass; and some they industriously contrived to get married among them. I understood they would tell the English that I was turned, that they might gain them to change their religion. These their endeavors to seduce to popery were very exercising to me."

After a time he was permitted to return to Quebec, where he met an English Franciscan, who, he says, had been sent from France to aid in converting the prisoners. Lest the minister should counteract the efforts of the friar, the priests had him sent back to Château Richer; "but," he observes, "God showed his dislike of such a persecuting spirit; for the very next day the Seminary, a very famous building, was most of it burnt down, by a joiner letting a coal of fire drop among the shavings."⁶⁸

The heaviest of all his tribulations now fell upon him. His son Samuel, about sixteen years old, had been kept at Montreal under the tutelage of Father Meriel, a priest of St. Sulpice. The boy afterwards declared that he was promised great rewards if he would make the sign of the cross, and severe punishment if

⁶⁸ Williams remarks that the Seminary had also been burned three years before. This was the fire of November, 1701. See "Old Régime in Canada," 451.

he would not. Proving obstinate, he was whipped till at last he made the sign; after which he was told to go to mass, and on his refusal, four stout boys of the school were ordered to drag him in. Williams presently received a letter in Samuel's handwriting, though dictated, as the father believed, by his priestly tutors. In this was recounted, with many edifying particulars, the deathbed conversion of two New England women; and to the minister's unspeakable grief and horror, the messenger who brought the letter told him that the boy himself had turned Catholic. "I have heard the news," he wrote to his recreant son, "with the most distressing, afflicting, sorrowful spirit. Oh, I pity you, I mourn over you day and night. Oh, I pity your weakness that, through the craftiness of man, you are turned from the simplicity of the gospel." Though his correspondence was strictly watched, he managed to convey to the boy a long exposition, from his own pen, of the infallible truth of Calvinistic orthodoxy, and the damnable errors of Rome. This, or something else, had its effect. Samuel returned to the creed of his fathers; and being at last exchanged, went home to Deerfield, where he was chosen town-clerk in 1713, and where he soon after died.⁶⁹

Williams gives many particulars of the efforts of the priests to convert the prisoners, and his account, like the rest of his story, bears the marks of truth. There was a treble motive for conversion: it recruited the Church, weakened the enemy, and strengthened Canada, since few of the converts would peril

⁶⁹ Note of Mr. George Sheldon.

their souls by returning to their heretic relatives. The means of conversion varied. They were gentle when gentleness seemed likely to answer the purpose. Little girls and young women were placed in convents, where it is safe to assume that they were treated with the most tender kindness by the sisterhood, who fully believed that to gain them to the faith was to snatch them from perdition. But when they or their brothers proved obdurate, different means were used. Threats of hell were varied by threats of a whipping, which, according to Williams, were often put into execution. Parents were rigorously severed from their families; though one Lalande, who had been sent to watch the elder prisoners, reported that they would persist in trying to see their children, till some of them were killed in the attempt. "Here," writes Williams, "might be a history in itself of the trials and sufferings of many of our children, who, after separation from grown persons, have been made to do as they would have them. I mourned when I thought with myself that I had one child with the Maquas [Caughnawagas], a second turned papist, and a little child of six years of age in danger to be instructed in popery, and knew full well that all endeavors would be used to prevent my seeing or speaking with them." He also says that he and others were told that if they would turn Catholic their children should be restored to them; and among other devices, some of his parishioners were assured that their pastor himself had seen the error of his ways and bowed in submission to Holy Church.

In midwinter, not quite a year after their capture, the prisoners

were visited by a gleam of hope. John Sheldon, accompanied by young John Wells, of Deerfield, and Captain Livingston, of Albany, came to Montreal with letters from Governor Dudley, proposing an exchange. Sheldon's wife and infant child, his brother-in-law, and his son-in-law had been killed. Four of his children, with his daughter-in-law, Hannah,—the same who had sprained her ankle in leaping from her chamber window,—besides others of his near relatives and connections, were prisoners in Canada; and so also was the mother of young Wells. In the last December, Sheldon and Wells had gone to Boston and begged to be sent as envoys to the French governor. The petition was readily granted, and Livingston, who chanced to be in the town, was engaged to accompany them. After a snow-shoe journey of extreme hardship they reached their destination, and were received with courtesy by Vaudreuil. But difficulties arose. The French, and above all the clergy, were unwilling to part with captives, many of whom they hoped to transform into Canadians by conversion and adoption. Many also were in the hands of the Indians, who demanded payment for them,—which Dudley had always refused, declaring that he would not "set up an Algiers trade" by buying them from their pretended owners; and he wrote to Vaudreuil that for his own part he "would never permit a savage to tell him that any Christian prisoner was at his disposal." Vaudreuil had insisted that his Indians could not be compelled to give up their captives, since they were not subjects of France, but only allies,—which, so far as concerned the mission Indians

within the colony, was but a pretext. It is true, however, that the French authorities were in such fear of offending even these that they rarely ventured to cross their interests or their passions. Other difficulties were raised, and though the envoys remained in Canada till late in spring, they accomplished little. At last, probably to get rid of their importunities, five prisoners were given up to them,—Sheldon's daughter-in-law, Hannah; Esther Williams, eldest daughter of the minister; a certain Ebenezer Carter; and two others unknown. With these, Sheldon and his companions set out in May on their return; and soon after they were gone, four young men,—Baker, Nims, Kellogg, and Petty,—desperate at being left in captivity, made their escape from Montreal, and reached Deerfield before the end of June, half dead with hunger.

Sheldon and his party were escorted homeward by eight soldiers under Courtemanche, an officer of distinction, whose orders were to "make himself acquainted with the country." He fell ill at Boston, where he was treated with much kindness, and on his recovery was sent home by sea, along with Captain Vetch and Samuel Hill, charged to open a fresh negotiation. With these, at the request of Courtemanche, went young William Dudley, son of the governor.⁷⁰

They were received at Quebec with a courtesy qualified by

⁷⁰ The elder Dudley speaks with great warmth of Courtemanche, who, on his part, seems equally pleased with his entertainers. Young Dudley was a boy of eighteen. "Il a du mérite," says Vaudreuil. *Dudley to Vaudreuil, 4 July, 1705; Vaudreuil au Ministre, 19 Octobre, 1705.*

extreme caution, lest they should spy out the secrets of the land. The mission was not very successful, though the elder Dudley had now a good number of French prisoners in his hands, captured in Acadia or on the adjacent seas. A few only of the English were released, including the boy, Stephen Williams, whom Vaudreuil had bought for forty crowns from his Indian master.

In the following winter John Sheldon made another journey on foot to Canada, with larger powers than before. He arrived in March, 1706, and returned with forty-four of his released countrymen, who, says Williams, were chiefly adults permitted to go because there was no hope of converting them. The English governor had by this time seen the necessity of greater concessions, and had even consented to release the noted Captain Baptiste, whom the Boston merchants regarded as a pirate. In the same summer Samuel Appleton and John Bonner, in the brigantine "Hope," brought a considerable number of French prisoners to Quebec, and returned to Boston at the end of October with fifty-seven English, of all ages. For three, at least, of this number money was paid by the English, probably on account of prisoners bought by Frenchmen from the Indians. The minister, Williams, was exchanged for Baptiste, the so-called pirate, and two of his children were also redeemed, though the Caughnawagas, or their missionaries, refused to part with his daughter Eunice. Williams says that the priests made great efforts to induce the prisoners to remain in Canada, tempting some with the prospect of pensions from the King, and frightening

others with promises of damnation, joined with predictions of shipwreck on the way home. He thinks that about one hundred were left in Canada, many of whom were children in the hands of the Indians, who could easily hide them in the woods, and who were known in some cases to have done so. Seven more were redeemed in the following year by the indefatigable Sheldon, on a third visit to Canada.⁷¹

The exchanged prisoners had been captured at various times and places. Those from Deerfield amounted in all to about sixty, or a little more than half the whole number carried off. Most of the others were dead or converted. Some married Canadians, and others their fellow-captives. The history of some of them can be traced with certainty. Thus, Thomas French, blacksmith and town clerk of Deerfield, and deacon of the church, was captured, with his wife and six children. His wife and infant child were killed on the way to Canada. He and his two eldest children were exchanged and brought home. His daughter Freedom was converted, baptized under the name of Marie Françoise, and married to Jean Daulnay, a Canadian. His daughter Martha was baptized as Marguerite, and married to Jacques Roy, on whose death she married Jean Louis Ménard, by

⁷¹ In 1878 Miss C. Alice Baker, of Cambridge, Mass., a descendant of Abigail Stebbins, read a paper on John Sheldon before the Memorial Association at Deerfield. It is the result of great research, and contains much original matter, including correspondence between Sheldon and the captives when in Canada, as well as a full and authentic account of his several missions. Mr. George Sheldon has also traced out with great minuteness the history of his ancestor's negotiations.

whom she became ancestress of Joseph Plessis, eleventh bishop of Quebec. Elizabeth Corse, eight years old when captured, was baptized under her own name, and married to Jean Dumontel. Abigail Stebbins, baptized as Marguerite, lived many years at Boucherville, wife of Jacques de Noyon, a sergeant in the colony troops. The widow, Sarah Hurst, whose youngest child, Benjamin, had been murdered on the Deerfield meadows, was baptized as Marie Jeanne.⁷² Joanna Kellogg, eleven years old when taken, married a Caughnawaga chief, and became, at all points, an Indian squaw.

She was not alone in this strange transformation. Eunice Williams, the namesake of her slaughtered mother, remained in the wigwams of the Caughnawagas, forgot, as we have seen, her English and her catechism, was baptized, and in due time married to an Indian of the tribe, who thenceforward called himself Williams. Thus her hybrid children bore her family name. Her father, who returned to his parish at Deerfield, and her brother Stephen, who became a minister like his parent, never ceased to pray for her return to her country and her faith. Many years after, in 1740, she came with her husband to visit

⁷² The above is drawn mainly from extracts made by Miss Baker from the registers of the Church of Notre Dame at Montreal. Many of the acts of baptism bear the signature of Father Meriel, so often mentioned in the narrative of Williams. Apparently, Meriel spoke English. At least there is a letter in English from him, relating to Eunice Williams, in the Massachusetts Archives, vol. 51. Some of the correspondence between Dudley and Vaudreuil concerning exchange of prisoners will be found among the Paris documents in the State House at Boston. Copies of these papers were printed at Quebec in 1883-1885, though with many inaccuracies.

her relatives in Deerfield, dressed as a squaw and wrapped in an Indian blanket. Nothing would induce her to stay, though she was persuaded on one occasion to put on a civilized dress and go to church; after which she impatiently discarded her gown and resumed her blanket. As she was kindly treated by her relatives, and as no attempt was made to detain her against her will, she came again in the next year, bringing two of her half-breed children, and twice afterwards repeated the visit. She and her husband were offered a tract of land if they would settle in New England; but she positively refused, saying that it would endanger her soul. She lived to a great age, a squaw to the last.⁷³

One of her grandsons, Eleazer Williams, turned Protestant, was educated at Dartmouth College at the charge of friends in New England, and was for a time missionary to the Indians of Green Bay, in Wisconsin. His character for veracity was not of the best. He deceived the excellent antiquarian, Hoyt, by various inventions touching the attack on Deerfield, and in the latter part of his life tried to pass himself off as the lost Dauphin, son of Louis XVI.⁷⁴

⁷³ Stephen W. Williams, *Memoir of the Rev. John Williams*, 53. *Sermon preached at Mansfield, August 4, 1741, on behalf of Mrs. Eunice, the daughter of Rev. John Williams; by Solomon Williams, A.M. Letter of Mrs. Colton, great granddaughter of John Williams* (in appendix to the *Memoir of Rev. John Williams*).

⁷⁴ I remember to have seen Eleazer Williams at my father's house in Boston, when a boy. My impression of him is that of a good-looking and somewhat portly man, showing little trace of Indian blood, and whose features, I was told, resembled those of the Bourbons. Probably this likeness, real or imagined, suggested the imposition he was practising at the time. The story of the "Bell of St. Regis" is probably another of

Here it may be observed that the descendants of young captives brought into Canada by the mission Indians during the various wars with the English colonies became a considerable element in the Canadian population. Perhaps the most prominent example is that of the Gill family. In June, 1697, a boy named Samuel Gill, then in his tenth year, was captured by the Abenakis at Salisbury in Massachusetts, carried to St. Francis, and converted. Some years later he married a young English girl, said to have been named James, and to have been captured at Kennebunk.⁷⁵ In 1866 the late Abbé Maurault, missionary at St. Francis, computed their descendants at nine hundred and fifty-two, in whose veins French, English, and Abenaki blood were mixed in every conceivable proportion. He gives the tables of genealogy in full, and says that two hundred and thirteen of this prolific race still bear the surname of Gill. "If," concludes

his inventions. It is to the effect that the bell of the church at Deerfield was carried by the Indians to the mission of St. Regis, and that it is there still. But there is reason to believe that there was no church bell at Deerfield, and it is certain that St. Regis did not exist till more than a half-century after Deerfield was attacked. It has been said that the story is true, except that the name of Caughnawaga should be substituted for that of St. Regis; but the evidence for this conjecture is weak. On the legend of the bell, see Le Moine, *Maple Leaves, New Series* (1873), 29; *Proceedings of the Mass. Hist. Soc.*, 1869, 1870, 311; *Hist. Mag. 2d Series*, ix. 401. Hough, *Hist. St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties*, 116, gives the story without criticism.

⁷⁵ The earlier editions of this book follow, in regard to Samuel Gill, the statements of Maurault, which are erroneous, as has been proved by the careful and untiring research of Miss C. Alice Baker, to whose kindness I owe the means of correcting them. Papers in the archives of Massachusetts leave no doubt as to the time and place of Samuel Gill's capture.

the worthy priest, "one should trace out all the English families brought into Canada by the Abenakis, one would be astonished at the number of persons who to-day are indebted to these savages for the blessing of being Catholics and the advantage of being Canadians,"⁷⁶—an advantage for which French-Canadians are so ungrateful that they migrate to the United States by myriads.

⁷⁶ Maurault, *Hist. des Abenakis*, 377. I am indebted to R. A. Ramsay, Esq., of Montreal, for a paper on the Gill family, by Mr. Charles Gill, who confirms the statements of Maurault so far as relates to the genealogies. John and Zechariah Tarbell, captured when boys at Groton, became Caughnawaga chiefs; and one of them, about 1760, founded the mission of St. Regis. Green, *Groton during the Indian Wars*, 116, 117-120.

CHAPTER V

1704-1713

THE TORMENTED FRONTIER

Border Raids.—Haverhill.—Attack and Defence.—
War to the Knife.—Motives of the French.—Proposed
Neutrality.—Joseph Dudley.—Town and Country.

I have told the fate of Deerfield in full, as an example of the desolating raids which for years swept the borders of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The rest of the miserable story may be passed more briefly. It is in the main a weary detail of the murder of one, two, three, or more men, women, or children waylaid in fields, woods, and lonely roads, or surprised in solitary cabins. Sometimes the attacks were on a larger scale. Thus, not long after the capture of Deerfield, a band of fifty or more Indians fell at dawn of day on a hamlet of five houses near Northampton. The alarm was sounded, and they were pursued. Eight of the prisoners were rescued, and three escaped; most of the others being knocked in the head by their captors. At Oyster River the Indians attacked a loopholed house, in which

the women of the neighboring farms had taken refuge while the men were at work in the fields. The women disguised themselves in hats and jackets, fired from the loopholes, and drove off the assailants. In 1709 a hundred and eighty French and Indians again attacked Deerfield, but failed to surprise it, and were put to flight. At Dover, on a Sunday, while the people were at church, a scalping-party approached a fortified house, the garrison of which consisted of one woman,—Esther Jones, who, on seeing them, called out to an imaginary force within, "Here they are! come on! come on!" on which the Indians disappeared.

Soon after the capture of Deerfield, the French authorities, being, according to the prisoner Williams, "wonderfully lifted up with pride," formed a grand war-party, and assured the minister that they would catch so many prisoners that they should not know what to do with them. Beaucour, an officer of great repute, had chief command, and his force consisted of between seven and eight hundred men, of whom about a hundred and twenty were French, and the rest mission Indians.⁷⁷ They declared that they would lay waste all the settlements on the Connecticut,—meaning, it seems, to begin with Hatfield. "This army," says Williams, "went away in such a boasting, triumphant manner that I had great hopes God would discover and disappoint their designs." In fact, their plans came to nought, owing, according to French accounts, to the fright of the Indians; for a soldier having deserted within a day's march of the English settlements, most

⁷⁷ *Vaudreuil et Beauharnois au Ministre, 17 Novembre, 1704.*

of them turned back, despairing of a surprise, and the rest broke up into small parties to gather scalps on the outlying farms.⁷⁸

In the summer of 1708 there was a more successful attempt. The converts of all the Canadian missions were mustered at Montreal, where Vaudreuil, by exercising, as he says, "the patience of an angel," soothed their mutual jealousies and persuaded them to go upon a war-party against Newbury, Portsmouth, and other New England villages. Fortunately for the English, the Caughnawagas were only half-hearted towards the enterprise; and through them the watchful Peter Schuyler got hints of it which enabled him, at the eleventh hour, to set the intended victims on their guard. The party consisted of about four hundred, of whom one hundred were French, under twelve young officers and cadets; the whole commanded by Saint-Ours des Chaillons and Hertel de Rouville. For the sake of speed and secrecy, they set out in three bodies, by different routes. The rendezvous was at Lake Winnepesaukee, where they were to be joined by the Norridgewocks, Penobscots, and other eastern Abenakis. The Caughnawagas and Hurons turned back by reason of evil omens and a disease which broke out among them. The rest met on the shores of the lake,—probably at Alton Bay,—where, after waiting in vain for their eastern allies, they resolved to make no attempt on Portsmouth or Newbury, but to turn all their strength upon the smaller village of Haverhill, on the

⁷⁸ *Vaudreuil et Beauharnois au Ministre, 17 Novembre, 1704; Vaudreuil au Ministre, 16 Novembre, 1704; Ramesay au Ministre, 14 Novembre, 1704.* Compare Penhallow.

Merrimac. Advancing quickly under cover of night, they made their onslaught at half an hour before dawn, on Sunday, the twenty-ninth of August.

Haverhill consisted of between twenty and thirty dwelling-houses, a meeting-house, and a small picket fort. A body of militia from the lower Massachusetts towns had been hastily distributed along the frontier, on the vague reports of danger sent by Schuyler from Albany; and as the intended point of attack was unknown, the men were of necessity widely scattered. French accounts say that there were thirty of them in the fort at Haverhill, and more in the houses of the villagers; while others still were posted among the distant farms and hamlets.

In spite of darkness and surprise, the assailants met a stiff resistance and a hot and persistent fusillade. Vaudreuil says that they could dislodge the defenders only by setting fire to both houses and fort. In this they were not very successful, as but few of the dwellings were burned. A fire was kindled against the meeting-house, which was saved by one Davis and a few others, who made a dash from behind the adjacent parsonage, drove the Indians off, and put out the flames. Rolfe, the minister, had already been killed while defending his house. His wife and one of his children were butchered; but two others—little girls of six and eight years—were saved by the self-devotion of his maid-servant, Hagar, apparently a negress, who dragged them into the cellar and hid them under two inverted tubs, where they crouched, dumb with terror, while the Indians ransacked the

place without finding them. English accounts say that the number of persons killed—men, women, and children—was forty-eight; which the French increase to a hundred.

The distant roll of drums was presently heard, warning the people on the scattered farms; on which the assailants made a hasty retreat. Posted near Haverhill were three militia officers,—Turner, Price, and Gardner,—lately arrived from Salem. With such men as they had with them, or could hastily get together, they ambushed themselves at the edge of a piece of woods, in the path of the retiring enemy, to the number, as the French say, of sixty or seventy, which it is safe to diminish by a half. The French and Indians, approaching rapidly, were met by a volley which stopped them for the moment; then, throwing down their packs, they rushed on, and after a sharp skirmish broke through the ambuscade and continued their retreat. Vaudreuil sets their total loss at eight killed and eighteen wounded,—the former including two officers, Verchères and Chambly. He further declares that in the skirmish all the English, except ten or twelve, were killed outright; while the English accounts say that the French and Indians took to the woods, leaving nine of their number dead on the spot, along with their medicine chest and all their packs.⁷⁹

Scarcely a hamlet of the Massachusetts and New Hampshire borders escaped a visit from the nimble enemy. Groton,

⁷⁹ *Vaudreuil au Ministre*, 5 Novembre, 1708; *Vaudreuil et Raudot au Ministre*, 14 Novembre, 1708; Hutchinson, ii. 156; *Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, iv. 129; Sewall, *Diary*, ii. 234. Penhallow.

Lancaster, Exeter, Dover, Kittery, Casco, Kingston, York, Berwick, Wells, Winter Harbor, Brookfield, Amesbury, Marlborough, were all more or less infested, usually by small scalping-parties, hiding in the outskirts, waylaying stragglers, or shooting men at work in the fields, and disappearing as soon as their blow was struck. These swift and intangible persecutors were found a far surer and more effectual means of annoyance than larger bodies. As all the warriors were converts of the Canadian missions, and as prisoners were an article of value, cases of torture were not very common; though now and then, as at Exeter, they would roast some poor wretch alive, or bite off his fingers and sear the stumps with red-hot tobacco pipes.

This system of petty, secret, and transient attack put the impoverished colonies to an immense charge in maintaining a cordon of militia along their northern frontier,—a precaution often as vain as it was costly; for the wily savages, covered by the forest, found little difficulty in dodging the scouting-parties, pouncing on their victims, and escaping. Rewards were offered for scalps; but one writer calculates that, all things considered, it cost Massachusetts a thousand pounds of her currency to kill an Indian.⁸⁰

In 1703-1704 six hundred men were kept ranging the woods all winter without finding a single Indian, the enemy having deserted their usual haunts and sought refuge with the French, to

⁸⁰ The rewards for scalps were confined to male Indians thought old enough to bear arms,—that is to say, above twelve years. *Act of General Court, 19 August, 1706.*

emerge in February for the destruction of Deerfield. In the next summer nineteen hundred men were posted along two hundred miles of frontier.⁸¹ This attitude of passive defence exasperated the young men of Massachusetts, and it is said that five hundred of them begged Dudley for leave to make a raid into Canada, on the characteristic condition of choosing their own officers. The governor consented; but on a message from Peter Schuyler that he had at last got a promise from the Caughnawagas and other mission Indians to attack the New England borders no more, the raid was countermanded, lest it should waken the tempest anew.⁸²

What was the object of these murderous attacks, which stung the enemy without disabling him, confirmed the Indians in their native savagery, and taught the French to emulate it? In the time of Frontenac there was a palliating motive for such barbarous warfare. Canada was then prostrate and stunned under the blows of the Iroquois war. Successful war-parties were needed as a tonic and a stimulant to rouse the dashed spirits of French and Indians alike; but the remedy was a dangerous one, and it drew upon the colony the attack under Sir William Phips, which was

⁸¹ *Dudley to Lord -, 21 April, 1704. Address of Council and Assembly to the Queen, 12 July, 1704.* The burden on the people was so severe that one writer—not remarkable, however, for exactness of statement—declares that he "is credibly informed that some have been forced to cut open their beds and sell the feathers to pay their taxes." The general poverty did not prevent a contribution in New England for the suffering inhabitants of the Island of St. Christopher.

⁸² *Vaudreuil au Ministre, 12 Novembre, 1708.* Vaudreuil says that he got his information from prisoners.

near proving its ruin. At present there was no such pressing call for butchering women, children, and peaceful farmers. The motive, such as it was, lay in the fear that the Indian allies of France might pass over to the English, or at least stand neutral. These allies were the Christian savages of the missions, who, all told, from the Caughnawagas to the Micmacs, could hardly have mustered a thousand warriors. The danger was that the Caughnawagas, always open to influence from Albany, might be induced to lay down the hatchet and persuade the rest to follow their example. Therefore, as there was for the time a virtual truce with New York, no pains were spared to commit them irrevocably to war against New England. With the Abenaki tribes of Maine and New Hampshire the need was still more urgent, for they were continually drawn to New England by the cheapness and excellence of English goods; and the only sure means to prevent their trading with the enemy was to incite them to kill him. Some of these savages had been settled in Canada, to keep them under influence and out of temptation; but the rest were still in their native haunts, where it was thought best to keep them well watched by their missionaries, as sentinels and outposts to the colony.

There were those among the French to whom this barbarous warfare was repugnant. The minister, Ponchartrain, by no means a person of tender scruples, also condemned it for a time. After the attack on Wells and other places under Beaubassin in 1703, he wrote: "It would have been well if this expedition had not

taken place. I have certain knowledge that the English want only peace, knowing that war is contrary to the interests of all the colonies. Hostilities in Canada have always been begun by the French."⁸³ Afterwards, when these bloody raids had produced their natural effect and spurred the sufferers to attempt the ending of their woes once for all by the conquest of Canada, Ponchartrain changed his mind and encouraged the sending out of war-parties, to keep the English busy at home.

The schemes of a radical cure date from the attack on Deerfield and the murders of the following summer. In the autumn we find Governor Dudley urging the capture of Quebec. "In the last two years," he says, "the Assembly of Massachusetts has spent about £50,000 in defending the Province, whereas three or four of the Queen's ships and fifteen hundred New England men would rid us of the French and make further outlay needless,"—a view, it must be admitted, sufficiently sanguine.⁸⁴

But before seeking peace with the sword, Dudley tried less strenuous methods. It may be remembered that in 1705 Captain

⁸³ *Resumé d'une Lettre de MM. de Vaudreuil et de Beauharnois du 15 Novembre, 1703, avec les Observations du Ministre.* Subercase, governor of Acadia, writes on 25 December, 1708, that he hears that a party of Canadians and Indians have attacked a place on the *Maramet* (Merrimac), "et qu'ils y ont égorgé 4 à 500 personnes sans faire quartier aux femmes ni aux enfans." This is an exaggerated report of the affair of Haverhill. M. de Chevre writes in the margin of the letter: "Ces actions de cruauté devroient être modérées:" to which Ponchartrain adds: "Bon; les défendre." His attitude, however, was uncertain; for as early as 1707 we find him approving Vaudreuil for directing the missionaries to prompt the Abenakis to war. *N. Y. Col. Docs.*, ix. 805.

⁸⁴ *Dudley to —, 26 November, 1704.*

Vetch and Samuel Hill, together with the governor's young son William, went to Quebec to procure an exchange of prisoners. Their mission had also another object. Vetch carried a letter from Dudley to Vaudreuil, proposing a treaty of neutrality between their respective colonies, and Vaudreuil seems to have welcomed the proposal. Notwithstanding the pacific relations between Canada and New York, he was in constant fear that Dutch and English influence might turn the Five Nations into open enemies of the French; and he therefore declared himself ready to accept the proposals of Dudley, on condition that New York and the other English colonies should be included in the treaty, and that the English should be excluded from fishing in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Acadian seas. The first condition was difficult, and the second impracticable; for nothing could have induced the people of New England to accept it. Vaudreuil, moreover, would not promise to give up prisoners in the hands of the Indians, but only to do what he could to persuade their owners to give them up. The negotiations dragged on for several years. For the first three or four months Vaudreuil stopped his war-parties; but he let them loose again in the spring, and the New England borders were tormented as before.

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