

1640. man added that neither he nor his fellow-prisoners could do aught but praise the treatment they had received from the Iroquois, but that he did not think withal that it was very prudent to treat with them.

They treat with the former in bad faith.

The advice was sound: but they were not in a position to make war; so they concluded to negotiate, keeping, however, well on their guard. The Chevalier de Montmagny, notified by Mr. de Champflours of what was occurring, descended to Three Rivers in a well-armed barque, and sent the Sieur Nicolet and Father Ragueneau to the Iroquois to ask back the French prisoners whom they retained, and to learn their disposition in regard to peace. These deputies were well received. They were seated as mediators, on a buckler.¹ The prisoners were then brought to them bound, though but slightly. A war-chief immediately made a very studied harangue, in which he endeavored to persuade them that his nation had nothing so much at heart as to live on good terms with the French.

In the midst of his discourse he approached the prisoners, unbound them, and flung their bonds over the palisade, saying: "Let the river carry them so far, that they be no more spoken of." At the same time he presented a belt to the two deputies, and begged them to receive it as a pledge of the liberty which he restored to the children of Ononthio.² Then taking two packs of beaver, he laid them at the feet of the prisoners, adding that it was unreasonable to send them back naked, and that he gave them material for robes. He then resumed his discourse, and said that all the Iroquois cantons ardently desired a durable peace with the French, and that in their name he begged Ononthio to hide under his clothes the hatchets of the Algonquins and Hurons while the peace was in nego-

¹ See Sagard, *Histoire*, p. 447.

² Ononthio, in Huron and Iroquois, means *Great Mountain*, and this, they were told, was the name of Mr. de Montmagny. From this time

these Indians, and all others after their example, called the governor-general of New France, Ononthio, and the king of France, the great Ononthio.—*Charlevoix.*