

1648. made—at least, on the footing proposed. On the other hand, the Iroquois having been for six months without making any new attempt, the Indians once more forgot that they had to deal with an enemy against whom they should never cease for a single day to be on their guard.

Supineness
of the Hu-
rons.

In regard to the Hurons, it was not the fault of their missionaries that they were supine; but these religious, unable to persuade their neophytes to adopt, for their own preservation, the precautions which prudence dictated, redoubled their exertions to sanctify them and prepare them for any event. On this score they were met by perfect docility. They found no difficulty in inspiring sentiments most suitable to the sad situation to which they reduced themselves by their inconceivable lethargy and blindness—unexampled, perhaps, in history. What consoled the pastors was to see them, when necessary, face death with a courage which inspired them, in turn, to die as Christian heroes. Father Jogues and Father Daniel soon had imitators, who gave the Indian Christians the most exalted idea of their zeal and constancy.

Two Huron
towns de-
stroyed by
the Iro-
quois.

1649.

On the 16th of March, 1649, a party of one thousand Iroquois fell suddenly, before daybreak, on the town of St. Ignatius. It was strongly enough fortified against any Indian attack, but it contained at the time only four hundred souls, and no watch was kept. The assailants accordingly had no trouble except to set fire to the palisades and massacre people,—some asleep, and others not spared time enough to understand their position. Only three men escaped¹ to St. Louis, which was not far distant, to give the alarm there.

Boston, but could not alter the decision adopted by Plymouth. The general court refused: Hazard, ii., p. 183.

¹ The Iroquois lost only ten in the attack: Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1649, p. 10. For the full details of the loss of St. Ignatius

and St. Louis, see Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1649, p. 17; Creuxius, Historia Canadensis, p. 537; Memoires sur les Vertus, etc., MS; Gobat, Relatio Historica, p. 87; Bresani, Breve Relatione, p. 107; Tanner, Societas Militans, p. 533; Garnier, Lettres, MS.