

1655. time commit the same ravages as had been seen everywhere that it had been preached :¹ and as nothing makes a greater impression on the mind of these nations than dreams, they imagined new ones every day,² to endeavor to bring the Onondagas to their object ; but they did not succeed, before care had been taken to forewarn the Indians on this point.

Destruction of the
Erie nation.

It was about the same time that the Iroquois completed their destruction of the nation of the Eries or of the Cat. This war had not at first been favorable to them ; but they were not disheartened, and at last got the upper hand so completely, that, but for the great lake which still bears the name of that nation, we should not even know that it had existed.³ It was reasonably feared that this new success would make the Iroquois resume their former haughtiness towards the French, but the Onondagas only appeared better disposed to unite themselves more closely with them. To this end they made advances which were deemed sincere, inasmuch as at bottom their own interest dictated the step.⁴ At last Father Dablon,

¹ Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1656, p. 25 ; Creuxius, Historia Canadensis, p. 775.

² Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1656, p. 25 ; Creuxius, Historia Canadensis, p. 776.

³ The Eriechronnon (Relation, 1654, p. 9), Riquehronnon (Relation, 1660, p. 7)—(misprinted Rigneronn, Relation, 1661, p. 29)—were called, evidently, Erie by the Hurons, and Rique by the Onondagas. They at one time dwelt on the southern shore of Lake Erie, but were compelled to retire very far inland by western enemies. They had many towns, cultivated the earth, and spoke a dialect of the Huron : Relation, 1648, p. 46 ; Bressani, Breve Relatione, p. 6. They were called by the French Cat nation, from the

number of wild-cats in their country : Relation, 1654, p. 10. In 1654 they were supposed to have two thousand braves, excellent bowmen, with poisoned arrows : Ib. None of the Relations give any more definite information as to their location, and of their towns but one name, Kentainton, has been preserved, and that cannot be identified. Catharine Ganneaktena, foundress of the Indian village at La Prairie, was from this town : Chauchetiere, MS.

⁴ This colony to Onondaga was promised in the spring of 1654 (Relation de la Nouvelle France, p. 19) ; but de Lauson had no means to effect it, and he sent missionaries, chiefly to gain time. A council held Feb. 29, 1656, in which a rupture was threatened, made it necessary