

1656. reduced in numbers, that it may be said that not a twentieth part now exists.¹ It was one of these detached bands of the Ottawa nation, who had been joined by some Hurons, that the two Frenchmen just mentioned had brought from the shores of Lake Michigan to Quebec, where their welcome was the more cordial from the praise bestowed by their guides on the treatment which they had received. Intercourse with the Hurons had somewhat improved the manners of that people, one of the rudest in Canada, and had even given them some slight tincture of Christianity.²

The two Frenchmen, who were worthy men, had baptized some of their children at the point of death,³ and these little innocents went to take possession of heaven in the name of their nation; but notwithstanding these fair hopes, the assiduous care of the missionaries never could induce the Ottawas to relish the things that are of God. There are few nations on the whole continent where more effort has been made to produce Christians and more unsuccessfully;⁴ but there was then no reason to judge so, and the peltries, with which those who had just arrived at Quebec were loaded, made Mr. de Lauson believe it his duty not to neglect this occasion of extending the trade of the colony.

Thirty young men offered to accompany the Ottawas on their return;⁵ and Father le Quien,⁶ who governed the mission during the absence of Father le Mercier, allowed himself to be persuaded to give them Fathers Dreuillettes and Garreau, with Louis le Boesme, a lay-brother, who

¹ Neither the *Relations* nor *Perrot* convey this idea

² *Relation de la Nouvelle France*, 1656, p. 39.

³ *Ib.*

⁴ The present missionaries have at last succeeded.

⁵ *Relation de la Nouvelle France*, 1656, p. 40.

⁶ His name was John Dequen, as his own autograph attests. In the *Relation de la Nouvelle France* for 1656, written by him, it is printed De Qven. He came to Canada in 1635, and labored chiefly at Quebec. He was Superior from 1656 to 1659, and died at Quebec Oct. 8, 1659, serving the sick in time of pestilence.