

siriniens, around a lake of the same name ; and finally, <sup>1634.</sup> the Ottawas, who were scattered at various points along the river, of which they claimed to be absolute masters, to such an extent that they had established a toll on all canoes ascending or descending.

It only remained to gain the Iroquois, and the point was of infinite importance. Success would have been comparatively easy, if, at first, these Indians had seen us strong enough to impose the law upon them, or at least turn the scale in favor of their antagonists, who were our allies. A thousand men maintained in the Huron country, with three or four forts, would have been enough ; but the necessity was not perceived till it was too late.<sup>1</sup> The opportunity of bringing the Iroquois to terms, and perhaps binding them to us forever, was all the better then, as they had not yet had any intercourse with the Dutch settled near them,<sup>2</sup> and our allies were well disposed to unite in a last effort against them.

The present object was to introduce missionaries among the Hurons, and those appointed to begin this good work impatiently waited the return of some Indians who had promised to come for them. They arrived at last, but so few in number and so badly equipped that it was very evident that they did not intend to keep their word. They did not omit, however, to betoken great good-will at first ; but, when asked to fulfil the promise, they excused themselves on the ground of their being so fatigued with their voyage that they would scarcely have strength to carry back their canoes empty.

Fathers de  
Brebeuf  
and Daniel  
reach their  
country.

<sup>1</sup> Charlevoix speaks of this as an easy matter ; but a simpler way than his large force and forts in the Huron country would have been for France to take possession of New Netherland, as the English subsequently did. The Iroquois, then dependent on the French for trade, would have to make terms. Canada,

a long valley, presenting to a foe a weak flank, easily pierced, can never be strong. The possession of New York was essential.

<sup>2</sup> The first treaty between the Dutch and Mohawks, at Norman's Kill, was in 1618 (O'Callaghan, New Netherland, i., p. 78). The Mohawks obtained firearms as early as 1621.