

1668.

Father
Stephen de
Carheil.

and in hopes of a fate like that of many of his brethren, who had bedewed Canada with their blood, he had employed a kind of violence with his Superiors to obtain a mission, whose obscurity sheltered him from all ambition, and offered him only crosses. There he labored untiringly for more than sixty years. He spoke Huron and Iroquois with as much ease and elegance as his maternal tongue. French and Indians concurred in regarding him as a saint, and a genius of the highest order. Yet he accomplished few conversions.* For this he humbled himself before God; and this humiliation served to sanctify him more and more. He has often protested to me that he adored the designs of Providence in his regard, convinced that he would have imperilled his salvation by the success which he might have claimed on a more distinguished stage, and that this thought consoled him without price for the barrenness of his long and toilsome apostolate. I have deemed it proper to cite this example, that those who enter on the evangelic career may understand that their time and toil will not be lost, if they become saints; that the conquest of souls is solely the work of Grace; that not only natural talents, but the sublimest virtues themselves, have no efficacy for touching the heart except when God vouchsafes to impart it, and that when their labors are fruitless, they must remember that the ministering spirits, who draw from the very bosom of the Deity that heavenly fire, one spark of which would suffice to inflame the whole world with divine love, and to whom the guardianship of kingdoms and individuals is especially committed, are often compelled to mourn over the blindness of the heathen, and the hardened obstinacy of the sinner.

But the most precious fruits reaped from the peace,¹ now

¹ The vague statement here seems not based on any documentary evidence. See vol. ii., p. 8, note, for the position of the Algonquin tribes proper. These had in 1666 almost

disappeared, and could not resume their old seats. The upper Algonquins were constantly shifting, but made no grand movement at this time.